

Syrian papers blast U.S. view of Assad

DAMASCUS (AP) — State-run newspapers Sunday disputed an American contention that President Hafez Al Assad may be too suspicious of Israel ever to make peace with the Jewish state. In an interview published Friday in the Los Angeles Times, Secretary of State Warren Christopher said he was "more concerned than ever as to whether he (Assad) will be able to execute his intention (for peace) because of his suspicion and fear." The Syrian newspapers, in their reaction, did not mention Mr. Christopher by name and spoke of "U.S. State Department statements" made recently. Nonetheless, they appeared to be reacting to his statements. The newspaper Tishrin wrote that the American statements would only serve to increase what it called Israel's intransigence in the peace process. "We wish that such statements were not made, because they outline a dim future for the peace process and make Syria responsible for that," the daily wrote. "Such a step encourages Israel to increase its intransigence, prevarication and rejection of a commitment to a just and lasting peace."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالإنجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية - الراي

Arab Bank plc Investment Funds

Managed Currency Fund
International Bond Fund
Asia Pacific Growth Fund

Products with proven track record, for long term investors. For more information and application form

please contact our International Private Banking

Amman Tel: 688210 Fax: 688198
London Tel: (44 171) 3158553 Fax: 6002617
Singapore Tel: (065) 5330055 Fax: 5322150

Volume 21 Number 6213

AMMAN MONDAY, MAY 6, 1996, DHUL-HILJA 18, 1416

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

Aldeed: EU envoy persona non grata

MOGADISHU (AFP) — The unrecognised government of Somalia's leader General Mohamed Farah Aidede has declared the European Union's (EU) special envoy in Somalia Sigurd Illing persona non grata with immediate effect. General Aidede, whose United Somali Congress (USC/SNA) faction government was formed after a conference of his supporters declared him interim president of Somalia for three years on June 15 last year, has been accusing Mr. Illing of spreading propaganda that was against his administration. Gen. Aidede's faction also accuses Mr. Illing of financing local conflicts in Somalia. But in a press statement released here on Sunday, Gen. Aidede further accused Mr. Illing of holding a meeting with (EU) embassies in Nairobi in Kenya, only two days before last Sunday's visit to the Kenyan capital by U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, which, he said, was aimed at further destabilising Somalia.

Egyptian official warns Iran

ASSIUT (AP) — A senior Egyptian official on Sunday accused Iran of supporting extremist Islam and warned the Iranian government would soon pay for trying to export its rigid religious views to neighbouring countries. Osama Al Baz, the top political advisor to President Hosni Mubarak, said the Iranian government's motive for exporting its ideology was to gain "sovereignty and the upper hand" over Arab states in the Middle East. "Extremism is the wrongful utilisation of religion to destabilise the security and stability," Al Baz said. "The Iranian regime will soon find out the extent of its mistake, which it used to implement religion in expanding the Persian ideology and influence in neighbouring countries," he added.

Manchester United crowned champions

LONDON (R) — Manchester United won the English League soccer title for the third time in four years when they beat Middlesbrough 3-0 away on Sunday and the only other title contenders Newcastle drew 1-1 at home against Tottenham. The results meant that United finished their 38 matches with 82 points, four more than Newcastle who were bidding for their first title since 1927.

Bildt warns of more Balkan wars

SARAJEVO (R) — The ethnic partition of Bosnia must be prevented if a costly series of Balkan wars is to be avoided, international mediators Carl Bildt said on Sunday. "We're going to see an endless succession of Balkan wars in the years to come if you accept partition as the instrument to achieve short-term stability (in Bosnia)," Mr. Bildt told Reuters and CNN in an interview in Sarajevo. "It is a recipe for long-term turmoil in an important part of Europe and an important part of the world." Mr. Bildt cited the likelihood of new wars in Bosnia and between Croatia and Serbia, as well as between Serbs and Muslims in Serbia's Kosovo region, if Bosnia is partitioned even on a de facto basis.

Libyan minister visits Algiers

PARIS (R) — Libya's Justice and Public Order Minister Mohammed Al Higazi arrived on Sunday in Algiers to deliver a message from Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi to Algerian President Liamine Zerroual, Algerian state-run radio said. He told reporters that his visit was in the framework of bilateral meetings over cooperation between the two countries.

PLO, Israel open last chapter of peace talks

TABA (Agencies) — Palestinian negotiators opened historic negotiations with Israel on a permanent peace settlement on Sunday declaring that their goal is an independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

"We aspire to live in peace with a Palestinian independent state, within the June 4, 1967 boundaries and with East Jerusalem as its capital," Mahmoud Abbas, the chief Palestinian negotiator, said in opening remarks at the launch of the final stage of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

"We commence today the permanent status negotiations with the objective of implementing U.N. resolution 242 and 338" asserting Palestinian rights to the occupied territories, he said.

Mr. Abbas, one of the leading architects of the interim peace agreements with Israel that led to Sunday's meeting, denounced opponents of the five-year-old peace process from all camps.

"They spared no effort to sabotage our peace process. To the terrorists of both sides we say once again, 'stop, stop,'" he said.

Calling on both sides to do everything possible to achieve success in the permanent status talks, which are due to conclude within three years, Mr. Abbas declared: "There will be two winners or

two losers."

Chief Israeli negotiator Uri Savir was also due to give an opening speech before the full negotiating teams sat down behind closed doors to begin their work.

Following more than two hours of pre-negotiation talks with Mr. Savir, Mr. Abbas deleted a reference in his opening speech to a 1948 U.N. resolution on the right of Palestinian refugees to return home.

He spoke only of "resolutions of international legitimacy to find a just solution to the refugee problem."

Israeli negotiators said Mr. Savir had objected to any explicit public reference by the Palestinians to U.N. resolution 194, which says that all Palestinians who fled their homes during the 1948 war have the right to return home or receive compensation from the Jewish state.

Israel has never acknowledged any responsibility for the fate of the 1948 refugees. "The real negotiations are about to begin, the past five years we have just been having appetizers," said Serb Erakat, local government minister in the Palestinian self-rule government and a negotiator.

Dr. Erakat said that by the end of the three-year period laid down for the final status talks, "the shape of an independent Palestinian state will

have materialised."

"I can't imagine a much further gap than the gap that exists between us over the issues of Jerusalem, refugees and borders," Dr. Erakat said. "It is not going to be an easy ride."

"That these negotiations began on time is evidence of the commitment by both sides to the peace process despite obstacles placed by outside parties against peace," said Jamil Tarifi, another Palestinian negotiator.

Diplomats from the United States, Russia and Norway were in Taba to monitor the talks but were not participating, officials said.

The opening session began with a handshake between Mr. Abbas and Mr. Savir.

Mr. Savir told reporters prior to the talks that the negotiations "really prove to both peoples that we are determined to go ahead until we come to (the) final status and full reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians."

On the agenda are, among other things, the nature of a Palestinian entity and its borders.

The talks will also cover the highly-charged questions of control over Jerusalem and the future of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Europe is better placed to achieve balanced Mideast peace — Agnelli

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Europe, in view of its proximity to the Middle East and strategic interests in the region, is better placed to achieve a balanced settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict as opposed to the American approach which is biased in favour of Israel, Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli said Sunday.

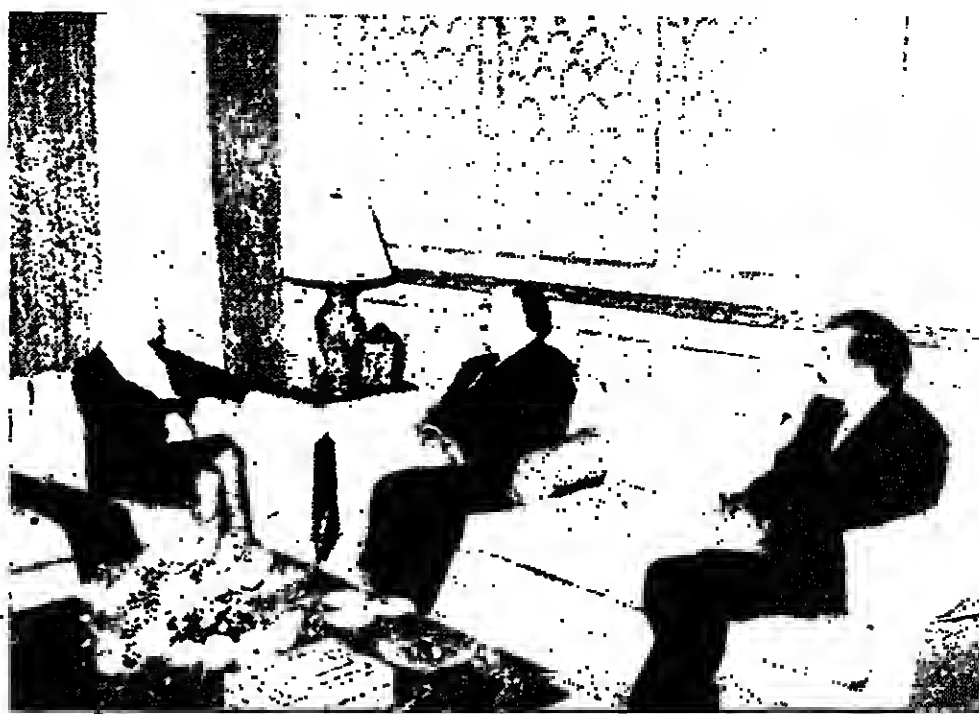
Ms. Agnelli, addressing the press after talks with Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti as part of a European Union (EU) effort to revive the stalled Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli peace negotiations, described the U.S.-brokered ceasefire that ended a 16-day Israeli assault on Lebanon on April 27 as good but signalled European scepticism whether it would hold.

Heading an EU troika touring Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon in the effort to push the peace-process, Ms. Agnelli underlined the differences between the U.S. and the EU stands towards the actual situation in the Middle East.

"Due to our closeness, as Mediterraneans, we (Europeans) can understand many things about this region better than the Americans," Ms. Agnelli told reporters.

She did not elaborate, but the comments reflected what seems to be a new EU drive to break away from the traditional U.S.-assigned role as the banker for Mideast peace agreements and carve a stronger-profile political role for itself in Arab-Israeli peacemaking.

The Italian minister, who was in the region during the American effort to broker the ceasefire in Lebanon, paid tribute to the positions adopted by His Majesty King



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Saturday confers with Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli, whose country holds the EU presidency, in the presence of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti. Prince Hassan hosted a dinner banquet at Raghadan Palace in honour of Ms. Agnelli, who arrived from Egypt earlier Saturday on the head of a European Trioka delegation. The banquet was attended by the delegation accompanying Ms. Agnelli and senior Jordanian officials (Petra photo)

EU to give \$130m grant to Jordan

THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) is giving Jordan \$130 million in grants to be appropriated in one year, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said, reporting after a meeting between Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and a visiting EU team headed by Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli.

The agency did not give details. It said that during the talks, Mr. Kabariti and the EU team "exchanged views on the peace process and underlined the need to push for a comprehensive and just settlement" to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Hussein and described Jordan as a key player in the quest for peace in the region. "We told (Mr. Kabariti)

"The meeting also focused on Jordanian-EU relations and (the proposed) Jordan-EU partnership agreement," the agency said. Mr. Kabariti "emphasised the importance of the EU role in peacemaking and peacebuilding" and reiterated Jordan's commitment to the Barcelona Declaration on EU's relations with Mediterranean countries and keenness to finalise the partnership accord.

The prime minister thanked the EU for its positions and economic support for Jordan, it added.

how much we appreciate the role that your King had during the whole peace process," she said. "Without Jordan, at

(Continued on page 7)

Peres vows to curb aggressive settlers' campaign in Hebron

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Shimon Peres vowed Sunday to prevent Jewish settlers from expanding their foothold in Hebron to undermine government plans to hand most of the West Bank city over to Palestinian control.

"I will not let settlers take over any new homes or enlarge existing homes" in Hebron, Mr. Peres was quoted by Israeli public radio as telling the weekly cabinet meeting.

He was responding to remarks earlier Sunday by Noam Arnon, a spokesman for some 400 radical Jewish settlers living in Hebron, who told Israel Radio that 50 to 100 new settlers would soon move into the city.

"We receive constant requests from people who want to move to Hebron, but so far we haven't had the place for them because the current government does everything it can to keep us from expanding," Mr. Arnon said, adding the new settlers would take over abandoned houses "belonging to Israelis."

Following a heated debate in the cabinet, Mr. Peres also said he would decide later this week when to redeploy Israeli troops in Hebron, Israeli army radio said.

Mr. Peres said he would convene ministers in his security cabinet within the week to make the decision. Also Sunday, Israel's army chief of staff, Amnon Shehak, toured Hebron to assess

the situation in the volatile city. Hebron is the last city in the West Bank still under Israeli control.

Mr. Peres reportedly wants to wait to pull troops out of Hebron until after Israel's May 29 elections in an effort to avoid increased friction between settlers and Palestinians. He has proposed making symbolic moves before then — such as sending in Palestinian civilian observers and evacuating army bases on the outskirts of the city, army radio said.

In Sunday's weekly cabinet meeting, Environment Minister Yossi Sarid accused Mr. Peres of giving in to threats from the settlers in Hebron, the radio said.

Mr. Peres insisted angrily that his decision was made carefully after consultation with security officials.

The Palestinian police commander in the West Bank and Gaza, Ismail Jaber, said delaying the pullout or withdrawing in stages was unacceptable. "We encourage the Israeli side to keep their commitment and stop setting hurdles that don't serve peace process," he told the Al Quds daily newspapers.

Brigadier-General Jaber said his troops were prepared to take posts in Hebron as soon as the Israeli army decides to pull out.

Israeli newspapers reported Sunday that the Shin

Bet domestic security service and the army were drawing up plans to prevent the settlers from occupying abandoned homes in Hebron before the upcoming army redeployment.

The Labour government froze all new settlement construction in the Palestinian territories when it came to power in 1992.

The Peres statement also referred to reports that Ariel Sharon, a leading hardliner in the main opposition Likud Party, was raising funds to build housing for an additional 200 Jewish religious students in Hebron.

Israel Radio said Mr. Sharon was raising funds from Jews in foreign countries to add a floor to the Shari Hebron Yeshiva, a Talmudic seminary located in the heart of Hebron which currently has 180 students.

Under the terms of the Oslo peace accords, the Israeli army was to withdraw on March 28 from about 75 per cent of Hebron.

A small Israeli force would remain behind to protect the Jewish settlers and Jewish religious sites in the city, historically a flashpoint of Arab-Israeli violence.

Mr. Peres delayed the Hebron pullback after a spate of suicide bombings in Israel by Palestinian militants in late February and early March.

Yilmaz not ready for water-sharing accord

CAIRO (AP) — Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz was quoted Sunday as saying water is as important to Turkey as oil for the Arabs and his government is not ready for a water-sharing pact with Syria and Iraq.

The statement was the strongest suggestion by a Turkish leader yet that Turkey will not meet demands by Syria and Iraq for an agreement giving each of the three countries an equal share of water from the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

Mr. Yilmaz said, however, that Turkey will keep providing both Syria and Iraq with what it sees as their need for water from the two rivers, which flow from its territory into the neighbouring states.

"As the Arab World is not thinking of sharing its oil with others, Turkey is not ready to share water flowing in its territories with others," Mr. Yilmaz told the Arabic weekly Al Wasat to be issued Monday. A copy of the

magazine was made available to the Associated Press.

"We will take our needs from the water, and no reaction will stop us from achieving this goal," he told the London-based magazine.

Mr. Yilmaz also said that Turkey is planning to sell surplus water to foreign countries, but he did not say which ones. President Suleyman Demirel was quoted earlier this year as saying that Israel and Turkey are considering plans for a water pipeline under the Mediterranean to supply the Jewish state.

Both Syria and Iraq have been complaining that Turkey has diverted water from the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

Relations between Turkey and some Arab countries also hit a new low recently over a military agreement Ankara signed with Israel which will allow Israeli warplanes to fly training sorties over Turkish territory.

Bombs cause heavy damage in Bahrain

MANAMA (Agencies) — Explosions triggered by booby-trapped cigarette packets hit local and foreign firms across Bahrain before dawn on Sunday, causing millions of dollars in damage but no injuries.

It was the most devastating string of attacks against businesses in the Gulf's leading financial centre since unrest erupted 17 months ago.

Fires following the explosions "caused damage estimated at millions of dollars, but no casualties," said a government official who denounced them as "terrorist acts" aimed at undermining the country's economy and stability.

The offices of the British firm Bahraini Norwich Union Insurance Company was damaged while three stores in the same building were damaged or destroyed by fires that apparently followed separate explosions, witnesses said.

A nearby shop that sold Western, Arabic and Indian music cassettes was also attacked, while three clothing stores owned by Indian businessmen were damaged or gutted in fires also triggered by separate explosions, the owners said.

Details of a ninth attack and an official breakdown of all of them could not be obtained.

"Initial results of the investigation show they were caused by cigarette packets filled with explosives and

flammable products," the official said.

Informed sources also reported that booby-trapped cigarette packets were found and defused at two other businesses in the capital, including the Yateem Centre where a bomb attack occurred last year.

Norwich Union is a complex owned by the Yussef Ben Ahmad Kanoo Group, one of the Gulf's biggest trading firms, which also houses the offices of Air India, the Australian airline Qantas and the Union de Banques Arabes et Francaises of France.

But they were not damaged.

The official denounced as "misinformation" statements from a London-based exiled opposition group, the Bahraini Freedom Movement, that the violence was fuelled by "collective punishment" on anti-government activists.

"These terrorist acts have no political justification," he added.

But the attacks on businesses occurred on the 40th day after a Shiite Muslim, Issa Oambar, was executed by firing squad for murdering a police officer during political unrest.

A British businessman said news of "the blasts have shaken me and my colleagues. We do not know if expatriate businessmen are now being targeted. If this is so, it will be very bad."

Iraq warns U.S. stay out of oil talks resuming today

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq will resume its oil-for-food negotiations with the United States and Britain tomorrow, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz said Sunday.

"We have given instructions for our delegation to go to New York" to resume the talks on Monday following an accord with U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali, Mr. Aziz told the official Iraqi News Agency (INA).

The two sides have since February been negotiating U.N. Security Council Resolution 986 in a bid to allow Iraq to export \$2 billion worth of oil for six months in order to buy food and medi-

cine under strict control.

"The chances of success for the fourth round of negotiations depend on the readiness of the U.N. secretary general's office to prevent any intervention by the United States and Britain," Mr. Aziz said.

"If the United States and Britain continue to interfere in the negotiations, they will assume complete responsibility for the failure of the talks," he warned.

The third round of talks was suspended on April 24 as Mr. Aziz accused the United States and Britain of trying to torpedo a deal by interfering in the negotiations.

Washington and London,

which had asked for amendments to a draft agreement reached between the U.N. and Iraq, replied they were trying to ensure Baghdad would strictly adhere to the resolution.

"The U.S. and British intervention during the last session was illegal, served tendentious political aims and violated the decision of Security Council members not to engage in the talks," Mr. Aziz said.

He said Iraq started the negotiations with the U.N. on Resolution 986 "as a temporary solution while waiting for the application of paragraph 22 of Resolution 687."

This clause calls for a lift-

ing of the six-year oil embargo once Iraq satisfies U.N. demands for the dismantling of its programmes for nuclear, biological and chemical weapons as well as long-range ballistic missiles.

"Both the United States and Britain insist on torpedoing the oil-for-food negotiations or make them last indefinitely. It will therefore be logical to return to the application of the clause calling for the total lifting of the oil embargo," Mr. Aziz said.

The deputy premier said Iraq had fulfilled its disarmament commitments and had demonstrated "sufficient seriousness, patience and

cooperation" with the U.N. Special Commission charged with dismantling Iraq.

Mr. Aziz urged UNSCOM to accelerate its work in the country in order to close its weapons files and report to the Security Council that Iraq had honoured obligations leading to the removal of the oil embargo.

"Procrastination and delaying techniques (by UNSCOM)... And the opening of secondary issues irrelevant to the substance of the subject... have no technical justification and in reality... serve none but the dubious political aims of the United States," Mr. Aziz said.

Hijazi Laboratories for Medical Analysis offers The INTERNET Service.

Our Customers can receive their results or send messages at our E-Mail address hirma@go.com.jo. Also our new Web Site: <http://www.xroadsme.com/hijazlabs> Offers more information and new Services. pls. call: 617303, fax: 617303 P.O.Box 830043 Zahran 11183

Ocalan: No suicide attacks in Germany

BONN (Agencies) — The leader of the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), Abdullah Ocalan, has said his organisation would intensify its activity in Turkey, but he pledged it would not carry out suicide attacks in Germany.

Mr. Ocalan was speaking in an interview with the German television network, ZDF, recorded in his headquarters in the Middle East.

He did not rule out the prospect that holiday-makers, notably Germans, would be affected by the unrest, but he said tourists would not be the direct target of PKK attacks.

Pledging that there would be no violence by the PKK or its members in Germany, Mr. Ocalan nevertheless said that if his people continued to come under pressure from Turkey, he could not rule out "spontaneous action" in Germany.

If that is the case, he added, his organisation would not be responsible.

In late March, the PKK leader warned that "every Kurd would become a human bomb" if Germany continued to support the Turkish government in what he called the "genocide" of the Kurdish people in what he called the "genocide" of the Kurdish people.

The PKK was also reported in early April to have issued death threats against German politicians, including

Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel.

Mr. Ocalan, who is known as Apo, denied issuing death threats and claimed they were part of a propaganda campaign being waged by Turkish intelligence service against the PKK.

He added that the PKK wanted to establish a dialogue with the German government, and said he hoped the PKK — which has been outlawed in Germany since 1992 — would be authorised.

Considered a terrorist organisation by Bonn, the PKK is usually held responsible for attacks which regularly target Turkish interests based in Germany, where 400,000 Kurds are resident.

Mr. Ocalan also said the PKK did not plan to specifically target tourists travelling in Turkey, as German papers have reported.

But he said he could not guarantee that foreign tourists would not be unintentional victims of PKK attacks in Turkey.

"Of course as the war spreads, tourists could be endangered," said Mr. Ocalan, who is based in Lebanon. "The German and European public must know that war prevails in Turkey. I hope that innocent tourists won't be affected. But if something happens to them, we can't be held responsible. Our goal is to ruin the Turkish economy."

Denktash wants tete-tete meeting with Clerides

ANKARA (AFP) — Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash on Sunday urged Cypriot President Glafos Clerides to hold tete-tete meetings to find a settlement to the long-lasting Cyprus question.

"Only the two of us can put an end to this dispute, there is no other way," Mr. Denktash said in a written statement released in the Turkish sector of Nicosia.

"We can reach a settlement on the basis of bi-communality and by respecting the equality, sovereignty and rights of the two (Cypriot) sides," Mr. Denktash said.

Cyprus has been partitioned since 1974 after Turkey sent troops to the north of the island following a Greek Cypriot coup in Nicosia inspired by the former Junta ruling in Athens which

aimed to annex the island. U.N.-sponsored reunification efforts have failed so far as the last round of intercommunal talks ended without a result in 1994.

However, the European Union, which wants to accept Cyprus as a member, and the United States have recently stepped up efforts for a solution, calling on the two sides to resume talks.

The Greek Cypriot side insists on the withdrawal of nearly 35,000 Turkish troops deployed in the Turkish sector first, a demand Denktash rejects.

Mr. Denktash's call came in the wake of a visit by Greek Foreign Minister Theodoros Pangalos to Nicosia, during which both Athens and the Greek Cypriots have called for an international pressure on Turkey to facilitate a settlement.

Lebanon can count on French aid — minister

TYRE (AFP) — French Secretary of State for Humanitarian Action Xavier Emmanuelli could count on France to help repair the damage left by Israeli attacks, before wrapping up a 24-hour visit on Sunday.

Mr. Emmanuelli made the remarks late Saturday after touring stricken regions in South Lebanon, where Israel waged a 16-day operation against the Iranian-backed Hizbollah which ended with a ceasefire on April 27.

"The phase of extreme urgency is over and we have now moved on to a phase of reconstruction," said Mr. Emmanuelli.

Mr. Emmanuelli had talks

with Prime Minister Rafik Hariri and studied with Lebanese officials a series of French humanitarian projects, including the creation of an emergency medical team.

"I told him (Hariri) of French solidarity with the Lebanese people and we agreed there was a lot to do together," Mr. Emmanuelli said, who also met with leaders of non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

France, in cooperation with Lebanese NGOs, will set up services to provide psychological help to the victims of the Israeli bombardments especially the children, he said.



Armed Israeli policemen walk past Palestinians in the central market of Hebron on Sunday. Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres has put off a partial withdrawal from the West Bank town until after the Israeli general elections on May 29 (Reuters photo)

Inaugural El Al flight to Jordan is postponed

TEL AVIV (AP) — The inaugural flight to Jordan by El Al — Israel's national airline — has been postponed for fear of possible attacks, security officials said Sunday.

Attacks on Israeli and Jewish targets outside Israel were expected in the wake of the Israeli military offensive in Lebanon, the officials said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Militants in Lebanon vowed to take revenge after Israeli artillery shelled the village of Cana on April 18,

killing at least 91 Lebanese refugees.

El Al spokesman Nachman Kleiman said the delay in beginning the Tel Aviv-Amman service was "for technical reasons," but would not elaborate.

"We hope the flight can be rescheduled some time in the near future when the situation permits," he said Sunday.

Israel's Haaretz newspaper said the first flight was to have taken place on May 19. Mr. Kleiman said no firm

date had been fixed, but flights had been tentatively scheduled to begin by mid-May.

The opening of regular bus services between Jordan and Israel has also been postponed. "Transport ministry chief security officer Danny Shenar said the reasons were partly technical and partly security-related."

Israeli companies operating private bus tours to Jordan have been instructed to tighten security and Israeli tourists have been warned to

be "as inconspicuous as possible," Mr. Shenar said.

The Jordanian parliament called last month on the government to suspend Jordan's peace treaty with Israel if the Israeli attacks in Lebanon continued.

Tour operators reported a sharp drop in bookings to Jordan and a rise in cancellations.

"It started as soon as the fighting in Lebanon broke out," said Danny Christ, director-general of the Israeli tour operators association.

Thousands remember Rabin at murder site

TEL AVIV (AP) — Thousands of Israelis gathered Saturday to remember Yitzhak Rabin, singing peace songs and lighting candles as a recording of the leader's last speech resounded through the square where he was gunned down six months ago.

"I knew that from this horror, the peace process will emerge with a new, different, stronger significance," widow Leah Rabin told some 50,000 gathered in the plaza now named Rabin Square. "We have a covenant of blood and tears."

Mr. Rabin was shot and killed as he was leaving a pro-peace rally at the same site on Nov. 4, Gunman Yigal Amir, a Jewish nationalist who opposed Mr. Rabin's policies of giving up land for peace with the Arabs, was sentenced last month to life in prison.

The crowd Saturday was composed largely of young Israelis, many of whom said they decided to support the peace process after the shock of the assassination.

"The assassination moved us. We saw, we felt, we demonstrated our support for peace," said Alex Vardi, a 24-year-old student.

Although no politicians spoke at the rally, which was

19 given jail terms, 3 get death penalty in Egypt

CAIRO (Agencies) — Nineteen militants were sentenced to hard labour Sunday by the state high security court here for their roles in attacks which killed three policemen.

Two other militants were sentenced to death on April 2 in the same trial which involves a total of 29 members of Egypt's main armed militant group the Gamaa Islamiyya.

Of the sentences handed out Sunday, five militants were given life, nine were given 15 years, four (including a minor) were given 10 years and one was sentenced to 12 months. Five of those convicted are still on the run.

Seven people were also acquitted in the trial held amid tight security.

The militants were found guilty of carrying out eight attacks at Aswan and Kom Ombo, 920 kilometres south of Cairo, in which three policemen were killed and six others were injured including General Faruq Baddari, the head of the security forces in the Aswan region.

There is no right of appeal from the special civilian court. As verdicts were announced the accused shouted slogans denouncing the Egyptian government, the United States and Israel.

The tribunal judges were accused by the defendants of "apostasy" or blasphemy, and lawyers for the militants had unsuccessfully challenged the court's validity.

However, the Gamaa leader in the Aswan region Al Sayed Khaled Ibrahim, who was sentenced to 15 years, did not repeat an earlier call for the Gamaa to end its violent anti-government campaign.

Leading lawyer Montasser Al Zayat insisted last week Mr. Ibrahim would elaborate during the trial on his original statement on March 7, the first call for an end to the violence by any Gamaa leader.

The Arabic daily Al Hayat said Sunday Mr. Ibrahim would call for a year-long suspension of the violent campaign to help efforts aimed at ending the attacks which have killed 1,015 since March 1992.

Gamaa is considered the main, and only active, armed Islamic group in Egypt, and on April 18 its members killed 18 Greek tourists near the Giza Pyramids.

After the attack it also repeated its intention to continue the violence aimed at replacing the government of Hosni Mubarak with an Islamic state.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraqi authorities reopen roads to Kurdish area

NICOSIA (AP) — Baghdad authorities have reopened the roads leading from the city of Kirkuk to the Kurdish self-rule area in northern Iraq, the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) has reported. Citing fears about the spread of cholera from the cities of Sulaymaniyah and Erbil late last year, INA said late Saturday. Those cities, together with Dohuk, form the self-rule zone established under allied protection by minority Kurds in northern Iraq after the 1991 Gulf war. The Baghdad government has kept those areas under an economic siege for the past five years. Although there were independent reports of cholera in the northern zone, Baghdad's decision to quarantine the area also was consistent with the siege policy.

Egyptian held for 'spying for Iraq, Russia'

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian police have detained an Egyptian man on charges of spying for Iraq and Russia, security sources said Sunday. They said the unidentified man, a former passport control officer, confessed he had been recruited by an Iraqi intelligence officer after he began work at an Iraqi project supervised by the Russian government. He also said Russian officers for information in Baghdad offered him large sums of money for information on key military and civilian projects in Egypt. The man was on a mission when he was arrested at the Red Sea port of Nuweiba, the sources added. On Thursday, the date has yet been set for the trial. A 48-year-old man charged with spying for Israel. Last month, a supreme state security court in Egypt sentenced another Egyptian to life imprisonment with hard labour for the same charges.

Saudi Arabia to beef up armed forces

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia will boost its armed forces with men and equipment in its next five-year military plan starting in 1997, Defence Minister Prince Sultan has said. The official Saudi Press Agency said Prince Sultan was addressing a military parade in the southern province on Saturday. "The sixth plan for our armed forces which starts next year will... be an expansion plan, not only in purchases and deals but also in attracting men and graduates of the kingdom's schools and universities," he said. Saudi Arabia's military has grown in recent years to 105,000 men. In addition, the National Guard, which is responsible for defending strategic installations, comprises 57,000 men and 20,000 tribal levies. Saudi Arabia is a major global arms importer with \$75.9 billion in weapons transfer deals during the 1987-94 period. Fresh deals followed and more are in the pipeline.

Kuwait, Oman drop passport requirement

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait and Oman have agreed to allow their nationals to use identification cards instead of passports to enter each other's countries. A joint statement by the countries' interior ministries issued in Kuwait said the decision would come into effect on May 15, the Kuwait News Agency reported on Saturday night. Both countries belong to the 15-year-old Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) economic and military alliance that aims to boost cooperation and integration between its six member countries. Similar agreements have been concluded by other GCC members but there is as yet no GCC-wide waiver of passport requirements. Some Kuwaiti officials have called for sharply accelerated GCC integration in defence and foreign policy.

20 Filipinos who attended gay party held in Jeddah

MANILA (AFP) — Some 20 Filipinos are being held in Saudi Arabia after being arrested at a homosexual birthday party, local newspapers reported here Sunday. The reports quoted Philippine Assistant Labour Attaché Isidro Cepeda as saying that about 40 Filipinos and 30 other foreigners were attending the gay birthday party in Jeddah last month when Saudi authorities burst in and arrested them. Mr. Cepeda was quoted as saying that the group was arrested for violating a Saudi law banning gatherings of more than five people. The party included a "beauty contest" with men dressed as women, Mr. Cepeda was quoted as saying. He did not say whether all those arrested were homosexual or who was celebrating the birthday. Although at least half of the Filipinos were later released, the other half are still being held and the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not responded to embassy appeals to allow visits to those detained, the reports said.

Darwish feels at home in Israel after exile

TEL AVIV (AP) — Renowned Palestinian poet Mahmoud Darwish, who came back to Israel this week after 26 years in exile, said he feels at home in the Jewish state. Speaking in fluent Hebrew, Mr. Darwish said in an interview with Israel TV Saturday "I feel at home, like I never left." Mr. Darwish, an Israeli-Arab, left Israel in 1970, after joining the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) Executive Committee. Israel considered the membership a threat to its security. Mr. Darwish, 53, is known for his poems about his people's longing for a homeland and the suffering of displaced Palestinians. He resigned from the PLO committee in 1993 to protest the Israel-PLO autonomy accord, which he rejected as a sellout of Palestinian aspirations. Mr. Darwish was granted special permission to enter Israel this week in order to meet with friend Emile Habibi, an Israeli-Arab author. Habibi died on Thursday, however, and Mr. Darwish went to the author's funeral instead.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	Bonkers (cartoon)
18:30	Richie Rich
18:50	Doc — Bush School
19:00	Comedy — Boston Loose
19:30	Doc — Animals of the Mediterranean
19:50	Drama — T.A.O.
20:00	News flash
20:30	Ordy
21:00	La Vie Devant Moi
21:30	Scie — Les Plus Petits Ont Soi
21:50	Magazine — Epêre
22:15	Family Programme — L'Ecole de Faut
22:30	News in French
22:45	Magazine — Cinq Sur Cinq
23:00	News Headlines
23:15	Comedy — The Nanny
23:30	Rhythms That Speak
23:45	Doc — Rock Around the World
24:00	Echo
24:30	Doc — 100 Years of Capitalism in Korea
24:45	News in English
25:00	The Bold and the Beautiful
25:15	Taurus Rising
PRAYER TIMES	
04:51	Fajr
05:41	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:30	Dhuhr
16:12	Asr
19:23	Maghrib
20:50	Isha

CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swallah, Tel. 810740	
St. George of God Church, Tel. 837785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590	
St. Luke Catholic Church, Tel. 614190	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 626266	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 625226	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328	
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 945457	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 649532	
Church of Nazareth Tel. 676691	
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295	
English-speaking LDS Church Tel. 641490	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
Relative warm weather conditions will prevail with winds north-westerly light to moderate. In Aqaba, it will be hot, winds north-	

EMERGENCIES	
Food Control Centre 637111	
Civil Defence Department 661111	
Civil Defence Immediate 630341	
Rescue 630341	
Civil Defence Emergency 199	
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777	
Fire Brigade 617101	
Blood Bank 773121	
Highway Police 843402	
Public Security Department 630321	
Hotel Complaints 662800	
Price Complaints 661776	
Water and Sewerage 897467	
Complaints 897467	
Amman Municipality 787111	
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121	
Overseas Calls 010230	
Central Amman Telephone 630341	
Repairs 623101	
Abdoh Telephone Repairs 661101	
Abdoh Telephone 773111	
Radio Jordan 774111	
Water Authority 680100	
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Ramzi Mazzawi 894788	
Dr. Bassam Karadbeh 759200	
Dr. Salim Al Dawabhi 776751	
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 846770	
Ferdows pharmacy 778336	
Al Asoma pharmacy 637055	
Nairookh pharmacy 626372	
Al Salan pharmacy 626730	
Yacoub pharmacy 649495	
Shmouani pharmacy 637660	
Nairookh pharmacy 626372	
Najib pharmacy 847652	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Ghazi Ta'ameh 250080	
Alquds pharmacy (—)	
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre 812813/32	
Khaldi Maternity, J. Amn 644281/6	

ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:00	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
06:00	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
07:15	Beirut (RJ)
07:30	Aqaba, Milan (RJ)
08:00	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
11:45	New Delhi, Hayat, Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)
12:00	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
12:30	Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
13:15	Cairo (RJ)
13:25	Bahrain, Muscat (RJ)
16:30	Frankfurt (RJ)
17:30	Jeddah (RJ)
21:15	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:45	Damascus (RJ)
22:30	Damascus (RJ)
23:00	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
23:00	Jeddah (add) (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
06:00	Istanbul (TK)
07:45	Beirut, London (BA)
11:45	Cairo (MS)
12:00	Khartoum (SD)
14:30	Bahrain, Muscat (RJ)
16:30	Vicenza (OF)
16:30	Vicenza (OF)
16:30	Kiev (GU)
20:00	Doha (OF)
23:55	Damascus (AF)
01:30	Amsterdam (KL)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights	
06:30	Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.	
Apple	700/500
Banana	600/600
Banana (Mukammur)	520/520
Banana (imported)	880/600
Cabbage	100/60
Carrot	300/180
Cauliflower	180/100
Cucumbers (large)	180/100
Cucumbers (small)	120/70
Eggplant	220/150
Fava beans	600/400
Garlic (green)	280/180
Leaves	650/450
Marrow (large)	200/120
Marrow (small)	280/200
Mulakhia	280/200
Onion (dry)	180/100
Orange	420/300
Pepper (hot)	300/180
Pepper (sweet)	300/200
String Beans	170/100
Tomato	480/280



Minister of Social Development Hammad Abu Jamous (centre) Saturday attends the opening session of a 12-day regional workshop on "Training of Trainers in Participatory Rural Appraisal" organised by the Regional Centre on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development for the Near East (Petra photo)

Experts: Local participation can enhance rural development

AMMAN (J.T.) — A regional workshop on rural development emphasised the importance of local rural participation in development efforts.

Minister of Social Development Hammad Abu Jamous said that Jordan wants to provide training to capable citizens and to promote local community activity in augmenting social, cultural and economic development.

"We seek to achieve human and social security and deal with negative social phenomena; particularly poverty and unemployment," said the minister, addressing the opening session of a 12-day regional workshop entitled, "Training of Trainers in Participatory Rural Appraisal."

"Successful development requires the involvement of local communities," he said, "not only in defining their own problems, but also in assuming an active role in planning and executing projects."

The development process in the Near East is now facing new realities and challenges as well as political, economic and social changes.

"This makes it incumbent on the countries of this region to give due attention to training citizens to carry out projects," added Mr.

Abu Jamous. Amal Sabbagh, director of the Regional Centre on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development for the Near East (CARDNE), the workshop's organiser, also addressed the session.

She outlined the centre's programmes for the promotion of regional cooperation in agrarian reform and rural development.

She said that CARDNE aims to help countries of the region involve rural populations in socio-economic and cultural development, improve income and raise the standard of living.

"CARDNE's strategy from now until the end of the century hinges on intensification of efforts to train trainers and so guarantee the expansion of its programmes," said Ms Sabbagh.

The organisation will, in coming months, begin research to determine the effects of economic reforms on the rural poor in the Near East.

Following the conclusion of research, it will hold a seminar to discuss the outcome of the study and will pass recommendations on ways to reduce poverty in rural areas, according to Ms Sabbagh.

Eighteen training specialists from Jordan, Syria,

Egypt and Tunisia attended the workshop, designed to aid them in conducting future participatory rural appraisals.

A CARDNE statement issued Sunday said that the proposed methodology encourages rural participation in the decision-making process of projects that influence the quality of their lives.

According to the statement, it also allows their own needs and values to be expressed in that decision.

The workshop's organisers will present several tools that will prompt the participation of the local community in planning, implementation and follow up of development projects.

The two-part programme will include a familiarisation with the methods and tools of participatory rural appraisal, and actual field work in a locality that will enable rural residents to carry out their own needs assessments for development programmes.

CARDNE's activities are based on participatory methods that draw on experience of local communities, farmers, field officials and specialists in rural development and agrarian reform.

Qatar, Jordan plan accord on judicial matters

AMMAN (Petra) — Qatar and Jordan Sunday announced that they intend to initiate cooperation in judicial matters and legislation and are preparing for a draft agreement to be signed in Doha shortly.

The announcement was made by Najib Nueimi, Qatar's Minister of Justice, following his talks with his Jordanian counterpart, Abdul Karim Dughmi, who said that Qatar's request for Jordanian expertise and training in judicial affairs was among the main topics on the agenda.

Dr. Nueimi said his country hopes to benefit from the Jordanian Judicial Institute and from the country's judicial system and its specialists.

Mr. Dughmi said the signing of the draft agreement will take place during his coming visit to Qatar at the invitation of

the Qatari minister and after experts from both sides have finalised the agreement document.

Dr. Nueimi, who arrived Sunday morning in Amman across the King Hussein Bridge from the West Bank, said he has met with the Palestine President Yasser Arafat and Palestinian government ministers for discussions on cooperation in judicial affairs.

Describing his three-day visit to the Palestine self-rule areas as successful, the Qatari Minister said that he visited the holy city of Jerusalem which his country believes must be restored to Arab and Islamic sovereignty. He added that Qatar was supporting moves to help resolve questions related to the city.

Dr. Nueimi said that during his current visit to Jordan he will visit the



Justice Minister Abdul Karim Dughmi and his Qatari counterpart Najib Nueimi co-chair Jordanian-Qatari talks on bilateral judicial cooperation. Mr. Nueimi is heading a Qatari delegation on a visit to the Kingdom to request Jordanian expertise and training in judicial fields (Petra photo)

Higher Court of Justice, Institute and will discuss the clauses of the proposed agreement on judicial cooperation.

Multi-faceted presentation seeks to rediscover Gandhi

'Non-violent doctrine difficult to apply in Arab-Israeli conflict'

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies and the Indian Cultural Association proposed a series of initiatives to rediscover the figure of Mahatma "Great Soul", or, less formally, Bapu "Father of the nation" Gandhi, as his closest fellows used to call him.

An exhibition of Gandhi's original photographs, under the patronage of HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, a screening of British Director Sir Richard Attenborough's Oscar-winning film "Gandhi", and a panel discussion on the relevance of non-violence in the Middle East, were held May 4 and 5 at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC), to rediscover

this hero, an advocate of non-violence and non-obedience who, though belonging to this century, seems to be so far away from the reality of our days.

The first session of the panel discussion on the relevance of non-violence to

contemporary Middle East, held at the RCC yesterday morning, was chaired by former RCC Director Iyad Qattan and was attended by Indian Professor Ravinder Kumar, director of the Nerhu Memorial Museum and Library and specialist on non-violence, and former Minister of Information Mahmoud Sbarif.

In her introductory remarks, Alka Raza, from the Indian Cultural Association, said "non-violence has deep-rooted meaning in every culture, religion, and belief system."

Prof. Kumar explained Gandhi's technique of fighting for freedom and independence from the British empire, through mass mobilisation, civil disobedience and boycott of British products.

He said the very strength of Gandhi's theory was the idea of "appealing to the moral core of the opponent."

Mr. Sharif claimed that the historical, cultural and moral differences between the 1940's Indian context and the actual situation in the West Bank and Gaza do

not permit the application of a non-violence doctrine to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"While the British public showed sensitivity towards the injustice and oppression imposed by their own government on the Indians, in today's Israel, Prime Minister Shimon Peres' popularity grew after the Israeli attacks against Lebanon which resulted in the deaths of over 200 civilians (two weeks ago)," Mr. Sbarif pointed out.

Ant Greenham, chargé d'affaires at the South African embassy in Amman, and Indian Ambassador Gagan Wakankar attended the second session of the panel discussion, moderated by Indian scholar in peace research and non-violence Shariq Raza.

The exhibition of Gandhi's original photographs, which will last until May 7 and was officially opened Saturday by HRH Princess Rahma Bint Al Hassan, portrays the most significant moments in the Mahatma's life, from his days at law school in London and the beginning of



Mahatma Gandhi his preaching in South Africa against the apartheid, to his pacific campaign for Indian independence and his murder in 1948.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Regent, premier visit Ruweished

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, accompanied by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabarti, Saturday toured the Ruweished area and visited several places, including the Karamah border posts on the Jordanian-Iraqi borders and Al Ruqban where he inspected the services and facilities provided to travellers. The Regent also visited the Rishab gas plant and listened to a briefing on the oil exploration operations in the area and the potential oil production capacity. Prince Hassan met with the project staff and was briefed on the nature of their work. Also on Sunday Mr. Kabarti visited the ministries of Interior, Public Works and Housing, Education, and Industry and Trade where he met with the ministers and senior ministry officials, and discussed with them issues of concern and present and future plans to ensure the smooth and effective delivery of services to citizens.

PSD announces bridge closing

AMMAN (Petra) — The King Hussein Bridge on the Jordan River will be closed to traffic as of 8:00 p.m. Monday

to allow for maintenance work, according to Public Security Department sources. The sources said, however, that foreigners and citizens of Jerusalem will be allowed from Jordan to cross to the West Bank during the closure period. The sources added that the bridge will also be open to traffic from the West Bank to Jordan.

JUST to host nursing conference

RAMTHA (Petra) — To mark its 10th anniversary, the Nursing Faculty at Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) today will host the 4th International Nursing Conference in the Middle East, according to the Dean Ruwaida Ma'aya'h. The two-day conference will discuss 119 scientific research papers covering such areas as community health, maternal and child health, and management of nursing. Taking part in the conference will be nursing experts from Jordan, the U.S., Britain, Canada, Germany, Australia, Tanzania, Bulgaria, Finland, Kenya, Sudan, Turkey, Iran, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Oman, Iraq and Palestine.

'Terrorism, extremism not linked to religion'

CAIRO (Petra) — Jordan Sunday told an Arab League meeting in Cairo that terrorism and extremism are not confined to a specific religion or ideology but are connected with and often result from poverty, hunger, deprivation and the feeling of injustice, loss and despair.

Attempts on the part of some countries to link Islam with terrorism, and Islamic fundamentalism with violence are harmful to the Islamic faith, said Jordan's envoy to the meeting, adding that terrorism and violence did not originate in the Arab countries.

Jordan's views at the meeting were submitted by Judge Fahd Abul Item, member of the Higher Court of Justice.

The meeting is attended by Arab experts who will try to draw up a pan-Arab draft agreement on combating all forms of terrorism.

He called on Arab states to clearly differentiate between the expression of opinion and inciting violence, and between acts of terrorism and the legitimate right of resisting occupation and defending national interests.

"Much harm is being done to Islam which

preaches tolerance and peaceful coexistence among various cultures and communities and calls for the renunciation of aggression, because certain parties tend to link the faith to extremism and terrorism," added Judge Abul Item.

Stressing the need for the Arab states to clearly define acts of terrorism, he said that terrorist acts are considered crimes as are military invasions and threats of aggression against other countries.

He said extremism and terrorism result from economic, social and political situations differing from one country to another. Judge Abul Item said, however, that legitimate struggle for freedom and regaining of social, political and economic rights can by no means be interpreted as acts of terrorism.

The meeting is organised by the Arab League in cooperation with the Council of Arab Interior Ministers.

Save water ...
Every drop counts!

RS

Components Limited

For all your electronic & electrical needs

ATTENTION:

All industries
Universities
Hospitals
Hotels
Computer companies
Electronic engineers

RS components Ltd., the leading UK Co. in the field, announces the arrival of our latest catalog (1996 - 1997).



Over 40,000 items including:
- Semi conductors / spare parts
- Instruments - testing equipment
- Workshop tools
- And much more!!

We send out weekly orders for any parts in the catalog you may need. One (1) week delivery - competitive



Sole Agents:
Arab Computers & Mgmt. Services Co.
N. Nazari & Sons Group
Jerusalem Complex - Shamsi Tel: 667699 - 670877 Fax: 688100

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

* Works by Israeli, Jordanian and Iraqi artists entitled "Spring Exhibition" at Durrat Al-Ghazal, Jabbal Amman, until May 7.

* Works by Palestinian artist Nasser Samir entitled "Homage to Jaffa" at Durrat Al-Ghazal, Jabbal Amman, until May 9.

* Gandhi's original photographs from May 5-9 at the Royal Cultural Centre.

FILM

* "The Hombres de Eritrea" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabbal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

LECTURE

* "Modern Arabic Literature in German Translations" (Arabic) by Dr. Abdo Abboud at the University of Jordan at 11:00 a.m.

Aznar takes office as Spanish prime minister

MADRID (R) — King Juan Carlos swore in conservative leader Jose Maria Aznar as prime minister Sunday, opening a new era in Spanish politics after 13 years of Socialist rule.

In a ceremony at the Zarzuela Palace attended by his predecessor, Felipe Gonzalez, a beaming Aznar took the oath of office before posing for photographers with King Juan Carlos, Queen Sofia and top aides of the new and outgoing administrations.

He has promised a "centrist and reform-minded government" to tackle Spain's economic problems and prepare it for the European Union's planned monetary union.

"It is a great day for Spanish democracy...opening a new phase of dialogue and stable government for all the people," Mr. Aznar said after his Popular Party (PP) won a parliamentary vote of confidence Saturday with the help of regional groups.

The Popular Party defeated the Socialists of long-serving Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez two months ago in an early general election but failed to secure an outright parliamentary majority.

Mr. Aznar was forced to woo fiercely independent Catalan and Basque nationalist parties with pledges of greater regional autonomy, particularly in taxation, to win the confidence vote.



New Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar (left) is congratulated by King Juan Carlos after taking the oath of office at Zarzuela palace on May 5. (Renter photo)

with 181 votes in the 350-seat parliament.

Mr. Aznar, 43, who was due to return to the palace in the afternoon with a list of ministers, will be the third elected premier to take office in Spain since democracy was installed after the death of dictator Francisco Franco in 1975.

He was expected to underline his austerity drive by naming a slimmed-down cabinet of 14 ministers, one fewer than the outgoing Socialist administration.

The Economy Ministry will go to the party's economic spokesman Rodrigo Rato who played a crucial role in the complex negotia-

tions with the Catalan Convergence and Unity (CIU) Party that cleared the way to the new government's investiture.

Mr. Aznar has said that getting the economy into shape for monetary union, which means reining in the budget deficit and fighting unemployment — the highest in the European Union — will be his two main economic priorities.

But he has shed what critics used to see as an extremist pro-business stance patterned on that of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

In a bid for the political centre ground, he promised to preserve Spain's welfare and pension systems, while election campaign offers of quick tax cuts for the better-off seem to have been quietly sidelined.

A reinvested Gonzalez, who appeared on the point of quitting politics before his party's better-than-expected showing in the March 3 elections, has vowed "fair but firm" opposition to the new government.

The veteran Socialist, whose party won 141 seats to the conservatives' 156 two months ago, prides himself on completing Spain's transformation from international pariah in the Franco days to a major player in European affairs.



New Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar (left) is congratulated by outgoing Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez in front of King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia after taking the oath of office at Zarzuela palace on May 5. The conservative leader was sworn-in by King Juan Carlos, opening a new era in Spanish politics after more than 13 years of Socialist rule. Partially seen at right is parliament president Federico Trillo. (Renter photo)

Canadian children received blood tainted with deadly brain disease

TORONTO (AFP) — Frightened parents have flooded a Toronto hospital with calls after learning that their children received blood tainted with a deadly brain disease, officials said.

Officials from the Toronto Hospital for Sick Children said letters were sent to 525 families to warn them that a man who had donated blood received by their children had died of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in 1995.

Robert Haslam, chief pediatrician at the hospital, underscored that the risks of contracting the disease through blood transfusions were very slim.

"We debated the pros and cons of telling the parents," he said. "Let me tell you there was a lot of debate."

The hospital finally decided to inform the families of the children because "it was the ethical thing to do," he added.

"The family advisory committee felt it was our responsibility to tell the parents,

despite the angst it would cause," Mr. Haslam said.

The tainted blood was used in the hospital from 1989 to July 1995, when the Canadian Red Cross learned that the donor had died of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

The Red Cross issued a recall of the blood products.

The Toronto Sick Children's Hospital installed a special telephone line to answer parents' questions about the disease.

The fatal brain disease in humans is related to bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or "mad cow" disease, which sparked a crisis in Britain following the British government's admission in March of a possible link between the illness in British cattle and Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

The European Union banned British beef imports on March 27, a week after the government's disclosure.

driving license eludes woman after 26 years of trying

BRISTOL, England (AFP) — After 26 years, including 1,500 lessons that cost £18,000 (\$27,000), Sue Evans-Jones has yet to achieve her big goal in life — a driver's license. "I know I'm good enough to pass. I won't let this beat me. I'll pass my test soon. It's only my nerves," she said after she flunked yet again at Southmead, near Bristol in the west of England. Her confidence was buoyed by an excellent lesson just before the test, but then jitters set in right about when the examiner asked her to execute an emergency stop. "I just went to pieces. I have never done a bad emergency stop before — but unfortunately, I put the wrong foot down and hit the clutch, so the car didn't stop," she confessed. Her bad luck didn't stop, either. When roadworks suddenly popped up in the middle lane, Ms. Evans-Jones steered the car onto the wrong side of the traffic cones — and over the construction site went. How did her instructor, Nick George, take all this? "I have taught people with no legs to drive," said the 11th and latest of Ms. Evans-Jones' driving teachers, "but she's more of a challenge." Ms. Evans-Jones is not giving up. Not only has she booked another test for August, but she plans to buy an Austin Metro, which is going to cost less than all the money she's spent on lessons.

Vietnam opens marriage bureau for foreigners

HO CHI MINH CITY (AFP) — Vietnam has opened a licensed marriage bureau to pair up local residents and foreigners in response to a rise in illegal marriages supplying brides to overseas men, a report said Monday. The love-marriage-family consultancy centre opened two weeks ago to match up potential couples and to steer foreigners through the complicated red tape that surrounds marriages, the Vietnam News Agency said. No details were given as to the cost of the service but the centre's Deputy Director Le Minh Nga was quoted as saying that charges would be "reasonable and affordable." press reports in Ho Chi Minh City have recently highlighted the rise of marriage rings supplying brides mostly to Taiwanese men for around \$3,000. Women were being sold into marriages by impoverished families and then sent off for lives of near-slavery overseas, the reports alleged. Incidents of trafficking in women to southern China have also raised alarms. A city newspaper for women reported a sharp rise in weddings between foreigners and Vietnamese last year. Many overseas Vietnamese have been returning here in recent years looking to marry although most use family connections to find partners. Mr. Nga was quoted as saying that the bureau would offer a completely above the board service for foreigners wishing to marry Vietnamese but that it couldn't promise "sincere love" but only the hope that it would develop after the wedding.

Chinese hair tonic to hit world markets

BEIJING (AFP) — The inventor of popular Chinese hair growth formula Miracle Lotion 101 is taking his tonic overseas in an attempt to tap lucrative foreign markets, the China Daily said Sunday. Zhao Zhiqiang, who has become a successful businessman after launching the tonic in 1974 through his Beijing Zhiqiang 101 group, was quoted by the paper as saying he was planning to set up a joint venture in Singapore and a subsidiary company in Brazil.

Wallenberg reportedly did work for U.S. intelligence agency

WASHINGTON (AP) — World War II hero Raoul Wallenberg did work for an agency that was a predecessor of the CIA, U.S. News And World Report reported Saturday.

A U.S. News investigation of recently declassified CIA documents revealed that while the Swedish diplomat worked to save Hungarian Jews from the Nazis, he also was helping the Office of Strategic Services make contact with anti-Nazi resistance leaders in Hungary, the magazine said.

Wallenberg "maintained a steady flow of information between war-torn Hungary and Washington via Stockholm," the magazine said in an issue that will go on newsstands Monday. "For the Office of Strategic Services — precursor to the CIA — Wallenberg was probably the only reliable man in wartime Budapest."

Despite Russia's insistence that Wallenberg died in a Soviet prison in July 1947, eyewitnesses have reported seeing him in the Soviet Union decades later, U.S. News said.

Retired Swedish Ambassador Per Anger said he thinks Wallenberg, who is believed to have saved at least 20,000 Jews from the Nazis, remained alive as late as 1989 and may be alive today.

Mr. Anger told U.S. News that he appealed to Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to release Wallenberg after German Chancellor Helmut Kohl unsuccessfully intervened in 1989.

"He showed no interest" and "implied that he had no control over the KGB," Mr. Anger said.

After the war, U.S. intelligence remained silent on Wallenberg's fate. "Just to confirm that he had been an American spy," U.S. News said.

Jan Eliasson, the current Swedish under-secretary of state, said U.S. News overinterpreted previously known information when it called Wallenberg an American spy.

"As a matter of fact, it's only in the headline that the magazine says that Wallenberg was a spy. The article correctly says that Wallenberg was an asset to the United States during his stay in Budapest," the Swedish News Agency TT quoted Mr. Eliasson as saying.

Mr. Eliasson said that the Office of Strategic Services' representative in Stockholm during the war, Iver Olsen, was questioned by the CIA in 1955 and denied rumours that Wallenberg was a spy. Mr. Olsen emphasised that his contacts with the Swedish diplomat were limited to issues concerning saving Hungarian Jews, Mr. Eliasson said.

Also, in a comment to Swedish Television, Mr. Anger said he worked at Wallenberg's side almost around the clock "and we were definitely busy doing other things than spying for the United States."

He, too, labeled the spy allegations a "rehash of old stuff."

Australian charged after massacre moved to jail

HOBART, Australia (R) — The Australian man charged with murder in relation to the massacre of 35 people in Tasmania was transferred earlier than expected from hospital to a maximum security prison Sunday, police said.

Martin Bryant, 28, was taken by ambulance from the Royal Hobart Hospital to an isolated section of Risdon Prison in the island state's capital because of continuing threatening telephone calls to hospital staff, a police spokesman said.

"The doctors have made a judgment today that he can be treated at Risdon Prison," said a police spokesman.

"He has been moved so that staff can continue normal duties without the distraction of threatening calls," he said.

The transfer was unexpected as doctors Saturday said Mr. Bryant would remain in the hospital for the next few weeks.

Mr. Bryant was being treated in an isolated section of the hospital for burns to his back and buttocks after fleeing a burning cottage last Monday.

Bryant has been charged with the murder of 21-year-old Kate Scott, one of the 35 people killed. He has not been required to enter a plea.

A lone gunman armed with a high-powered rifle began a shooting rampage last Sunday at the historic Port Arthur convict site 50 kilometres south-east of Hobart, gunning down 32 people before taking three hostages, whose remains were found in the burnt-out cottage.

Since last Monday when Mr. Bryant was admitted to the hospital, where he was later charged with the one murder at a bedside court hearing, missing staff have received threatening telephone calls and the hospital has been the target of two bomb threats.

A Risdon Prison officer spokesman told reporters Sunday that Mr. Bryant would be kept under 24-hour electronic surveillance.



President Clinton laughs as he and Vice President Al Gore (right) congratulate Renter's journalist Susan Cornwell after she was presented with the 1996 Merriman Smith Memorial Award for excellence in presidential news coverage during the Annual Dinner of the White House Correspondents' Association. Ms. Cornwell won the award for a scoop from an on-the-record presidential speech which was not picked up on by competitors. (Renter photo)

Clinton, after Imus incident, enjoys White House correspondents' dinner

WASHINGTON (R) — With tears from raucous laughter welling in his eyes, President Bill Clinton appeared to enjoy himself at his first media dinner since the one with Don Imus that left him stone-faced and visibly angry.

The president clearly looked as if he was having a good time at the White House Correspondents' Association's annual dinner, a black-tie shindig where the president and the media who cover him put away formalities for at least one night.

Mr. Clinton, seated at the head table, chuckled at the jokes of comedian Al Franken, who has written scripts for and appeared on NBC's Saturday Night Live television programme.

Franken, a self-admitted Democrat who authored the best-selling book *Rush Limbaugh Is A Big Fat Idiot And Other Observations*, had the crowd in stitches as his 40-minute monologue touched on everyone from Bob Dole to Newt

Gingrich. Speaking about former Republican presidential candidate Lamar Alexander's campaign theme, Franken said: "I think we all remember Lamar's ABCs — Alexander Beats Clinton — or as I like to call it — A Bad Campaign."

Franken also included hilarious impersonations of Republican New York Sen. Al D'Amato and jabs at House Speaker Gingrich's book and Senate majority leader Dole's floundering presidential campaign.

Mr. Clinton, red-faced and beaming with smiles, looked as if he had forgotten about the skewering he took from Mr. Imus, the New York radio personality who cracked jokes in front of Mr. Clinton about the president's alleged marital infidelities.

At that dinner in March, hosted by the Radio Television Correspondents' Association, Mr. Imus, known to New Yorkers for his rambling sense of humour, unleashed a barrage of

jokes that some thought crossed the line of decency.

It ignited a debate over whether a sitting president has to endure risqué jokes at his expense, and it prompted White House Press Secretary Mike McCurry to take the unusual step of asking a public cable network not to re-air Mr. Imus's speech.

The Clintons appeared visibly angered at that event and bolted from the room after Mr. Imus finished his remarks.

Franken, who said he attended the dinner where Mr. Imus spoke, said: "During that evening, I came up with the title for my new book — *Don Imus Is A Big Putz*," a remark that elicited from the crowd, and the president, a huge roar of laughter.

But this time they looked like they enjoyed themselves, and they remained after the formal dinner was over to chat with reporters and pose for pictures.

Mandela worried about Zulu violence

DURBAN, South Africa (R) — President Nelson Mandela is extremely concerned at renewed violence in KwaZulu-Natal province and could send extra security forces if the situation worsens, a presidential spokesman said Sunday.

At least one woman was killed and eight people, including three policemen, were wounded during and after a march by 7,000 Zulus aligned to the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party in the KwaZulu-Natal port city of Durban Saturday, police said.

Presidential spokesman Joel Ntshenzhe told Reuters the president "has expressed extreme concern about what happened in Durban yesterday."

"He has consulted with the ministers of safety and security and defence and has expressed full confidence in the manner they are handling a difficult and complex situation in KwaZulu-Natal."

"The situation is being reviewed on a continual basis and if it worsens, security forces will be sent to KwaZulu-Natal."

But Inkatha said Sunday party supporters had defied orders not to take part in the March. The party blamed agents provocateurs for the violence and said it was aimed at scuttling local government elections in the province.

"We are very shaken by what happened during the march...The march took place against our instructions to our members not to participate because we are at a very critical time where the ANC will look for any excuse to have the elections called off," Inkatha Secretary-General Ziba Jiyane said.

Mr. Mandela called the special cabinet meeting after an all-party task force he commissioned was unable to make a clear recommendation whether a free and fair ballot could be held.

Mandela's ruling African National Congress (ANC) says alleged voter registration fraud and political killings and intimidation mean a fair election is impossible but Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha says the ANC is just scared of losing.

More than 14,000 people have been killed in KwaZulu-Natal since the mid-1980s in a turf war between the ANC and Inkatha. Inkatha won control of KwaZulu-Natal — home to South Africa's nine million Zulus — after all-race elections in 1994 which saw the ANC sweep to power nationally.

"We are calling for the government to intervene and to intervene decisively. The state must flex its muscles to end the anarchy in this province," provincial ANC spokesman Bheki Cele told Reuters.

The march in Durban was led by an organisation linked to Inkatha in protest against a government ban on carrying traditional weapons in public.

Police said a woman was shot and killed when protesters returning from the march fired shots from a train in Umlazi township, south of Durban, Saturday night.

Three policemen and five Zulu protesters were wounded after shooting erupted during the March in Durban city centre when police tried to seize a marcher with an AK-47 assault rifle.

Many demonstrators carried spears, sharpened metal rods and machetes in defiance of the ban to reduce violence.



Fighters with Charles Taylor's NPFL fire at enemy forces one block away during heavy fighting in downtown Monrovia. The fighting continued for the sixth straight day following the collapse of a ten day ceasefire (Reuters photo)

Liberians fetch water in break from fighting

MONROVIA (R) — Liberians hurried to fetch water in the capital Monrovia Sunday morning, taking advantage of a lull in fighting after an assault by Charles Taylor's forces on their ethnic Krahn foes in the main army barracks Saturday.

But sporadic gunfire could still be heard.

Negotiators said Saturday they had persuaded Mr. Taylor to agree to a ceasefire following the departure of Krahn leader Roosevelt Johnson for peace talks in Ghana due to start Tuesday.

But Mr. Taylor, who launched the civil war from Ivory Coast in 1989, promptly denied all knowledge of any truce and said he would not attend the talks — despite pressure from the United States which has warships offshore.

Mr. Taylor, a vice-chairman of the ruling Council of State, said council Chairman Wilton Sankawulo would represent him and his ally Vice-Chairman Albaji Kromah.

On Sunday morning Mr. Taylor's fighters milled around the empty Ambassador Hotel in the Mamba Point district, awaiting orders.

Mr. Taylor's forces were in control of two bridges linking the city centre to Bushrod Island and had widened their control of the downtown area, though front lines have moved little in four weeks of fighting.

Battles began on April 6 after the council tried to arrest Mr. Johnson on murder charges.

A truce agreed with West African and U.S. mediators on April 19 collapsed 10 days later.

Diplomatic sources said the Krahn had told them Thursday they would be willing to observe a ceasefire, and Taylor gave his assent after the Americans flew Mr. Johnson out of the country.

But Mr. Taylor's men homed the Krahn base at Monrovia's main army barracks on Saturday morning. About 60 people from the U.S. embassy housing compound, where

thousands of refugees from the fighting are sheltering, urged the United States Saturday to send in Marines.

Peter Senneh, chairman of the Graystone Displaced Centre, said they wanted the Marines to deploy along with West African ECOMOG peacekeepers to disarm the fighters.

"The United States was the country that gave us our earliest independence," he said. "If they had contained the situation earlier, I don't think it would have reached this point."

Liberia was founded by freed American slaves in 1847, and the demonstrators, who carried banners and tree branches, said they still viewed the United States as their mother country.

"America must save Liberia," read one banner.

Marines guarding the embassy shot dead three Liberians and wounded a fourth Tuesday when the compound came under fire during gunbattles in the street outside.

Chechen separatists shoot down Russian fighter plane

MOSCOW (AFP) — Chechen separatist fighters shot down a Russian Sukhoi-25 fighter Sunday near the village of Mayrtup, in the east of the breakaway republic, a Russian Air Force official told the Interfax News Agency.

The crew was dead according to first reports, the official said.

The plane was on a reconnaissance mission over the region of Shali, 30 kilometres southeast of the capital Grozny, the official said.

It was the fifth Russian plane shot down by Chechen guerrillas since Russian troops moved in to crush the republic's bid for independence in December 1994.

Earlier Sunday the commander of the Russian Ministry of Defence Forces in the republic, Vladimir Shamanov, announced that Russian troops were to launch a new offensive against Shali.

He said a "special operation" — Moscow military-speak for air and artillery attacks — would begin Monday at 8 a.m. (0500 GMT).

On Friday, Russian troops put back an ultimatum to Chechen separatists in Shali to surrender their weapons and leave the town.

The army has given religious leaders and town elders until Sunday evening to persuade the separatists to leave, Gen. Shamanov told ITAR-TASS news agency.

The pro-Moscow government in Chechnya says some 300 separatist guerrillas are holed up in Shali, which has been surrounded by Russian troops for the past two weeks.

Shali, the third largest town in the north Caucasus republic, is home to around 30,000 people, but last week thousands fled after Russian helicopter attacks on houses belonging to suspected separatist leaders.

Meanwhile Chechen rebel Commander Shamil Basayev vowed Sunday to avenge the killing of independence leader Dzhokhar Dudayev before the June presidential elections in Russia.

"Do you expect me to sit and wait like an idiot while Russia quietly completes its elections?" he said, in an interview in the mountainous Vedeno region.

Commander Basayev, heavily bearded and wearing camouflage gear and an Islamic green headband around a wool hat, vowed attacks that would force a Russian troop withdrawal from Chechnya by the summer.

"If Russian troops remain, I'll take over a Russian city and spend the winter there," he said.

"Of course I am planning to go as long as Russian troops have not left," said Commander Basayev, who led a spectacular and bloody hostage-taking in the southern Russian town of Budennovsk last June.

"I have a big choice, because Chechnya is small and Russia is big," he said when asked about what sort of action he planned to take.

"Russia has shown its treachery. We will have special operations just as the Russians do. We will kill them just as they killed."

He added, however, that he would not take hostages again. A Budennovsk-style raid could have "a big effect, but I am against this. Next time there won't be any hostages."

Basayev, considered the most daring and radical of the chechen separatist commanders, said: "If Russia can have state terrorism, destroy whole villages, take everything, steal everything from houses why can't we have self defence?"

Commander Basayev denied reports of a split in the rebel leadership and said he fully supported oew separatist President Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev, who took over after Dudayev's death in a Russian air raid on April 21.

The death of Dudayev, who launched Chechnya on its independence drive in 1991, was a blow, Commander Basayev said, but the separatists determination had been "strengthened" as a result.

According to Commander Basayev, troops from three Russian divisions

were withdrawn Saturday from the Vedeno region and only one division was staying, perched in camps on strategic hillsides.

Vedeno and the surrounding villages were captured by the Russians in brutal fighting over the last month. But Mr. Basayev said that constant attacks on the Russian supply lines had made holding the villages themselves impossible.

"We destroy the columns bringing food and ammunition. They have to supply with helicopters," he said.

Rebel fighters have already moved back into the villages abandoned by the Russians, he said, adding: "I control the region."

Several villages in the Vedeno region have reportedly signed "peace" agreements with the Russian forces before the troop withdrawal took place.

Under the accords, locals agree not to shelter fighters and the Russian army promises to leave them in peace.

However, Commander Basayev dismissed the accords as meaningless, saying: "You would sign an accord too if I pointed an automatic rifle at you."

Commander Basayev said fighters under his control were stepping up commando attacks inside Chechnya.

He said the massive Russian offensive from February to April which attempted to break Chechen resistance before the June 16 Russian presidential election had driven more Chechen men to take up arms.

"Weapons are a problem, we have too few. There have been thousands of volunteers but I cannot arm them ... if I had 100,000 rifles, I'd have 100,000 soldiers in a week," he said.

Commander Basayev, who described Mr. Yeltsin as "Satan" and Russia as "a colonial power" said his father's house in Vedeno was blown up by Russian troops after they captured the village.

He said he had lost 16 relatives in the 16-month war, which is estimated to have killed as many as 40,000 people.

Tigers step up attacks as Sri Lanka prays for peace

COLOMBO (AFP) — The Sri Lankan minister leading the military onslaught against Tamil guerrillas prayed for peace at an ancient Buddhist shrine as Tiger rebels escalated attacks, officials said Sunday.

Junior Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte stood opposite the Ruvanweli Seya Dagoba, a pagoda in the northern town of Anuradhapura, to pray for an end to the Tamil separatist war that has killed more than 50,000 since 1972.

Some 1,000 security force troops accompanied Mr. Ratwatte, also the minister for energy, in Saturday's prayers, which also sought divine intervention to end the country's crippling drought.

Vast areas of rice farms have suffered from failed monsoon rains, and Sri Lanka has introduced power cuts because of a severe shortage of water to feed hydro-electric power stations.

Local officials said that Mr. Ratwatte was following a tradition of ancient kings, who performed what is known as "Sanyakriya," a form of meditation, opposite the pagoda at times of national crisis.

Even as he took part in the religious observances at Anuradhapura — where Tamil Tigers massacred 146 Buddhist pilgrims on May 14, 1985 — Tiger guerrillas shot dead a soldier in the north of the country.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) attacked an army road block in the northern peninsula of Jaffna Saturday, killing one soldier and wounding an officer and another soldier, the Defence Ministry here said Sunday.

LTTE gunmen carried out the attack at Kodikamam in the Jaffna peninsula after sneaking into the area the army captured from them last month, the ministry said.

It said troops retaliated causing casualties among the guerrillas but no details were immediately available. The attack came hours after the Tigers blasted power pylons in northeastern Sri Lanka, cutting off electricity in the region.

The LTTE used explosives to bring down two pylons at Tharupalagam in the district of Trincomalee where they also shot dead two police constables, officials said.

Indian poll shows Congress has edge

NEW DELHI (R) — India's Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao received a welcome boost Sunday when a late poll said his Congress Party would have a slight lead to a hung parliament after a third phase of general elections this week.

The latest poll in the Times of India and the Economic Times, the country's two major newspapers, forecast 169 out of 543 seats for the Congress Party, ahead of 165 seen for the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The Socialist combination of the National Front and the Left Front (NF-LF) are expected to win 145 seats in what now appears to be a cliff-hanger leading to a hung parliament.

"It's interesting to see opinion polls in the media finally supporting us," senior Congress leader and Industry Minister K. Karunakaran told Reuters Sunday.

Various opinion polls published before the elections showed the BJP emerging as the single-largest party, though well short of a majority to form a govern-

ment.

Voting took place in some 150 seats on April 27, and 200 more on May 2. The next phase is set for May 7. All but six results should be known by May 11.

Repolling is being held Sunday in 511 polling stations where voting was marred by violence.

The Times poll combined a fresh round of surveying with findings of a previous opinion poll which had predicted 142 seats for the Congress and 139 for the BJP.

Sunday's opinion poll came amidst a growing controversy surrounding Mr. Rao's continued leadership of the party.

In a newspaper interview Saturday Mr. Karunakaran said, the Congress Party, recently hit by a spate of defections, would recover its old strength if Rao quit its leadership.

"We will have to find a new (Congress) Party president after the general elections," Mr. Karunakaran said. Mr. Rao's supporters dismissed Mr. Karunakaran's statement as his "personal views."

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has for the first time openly blamed India for two recent bomb blasts in Pakistan, an accusation likely to further sour the already tense relations between the South Asian rivals.

Ms. Bhutto blamed the Indian secret service for the blasts which killed 58 people in Punjab province last month, saying the blasts were carried out to divert attention from "sham" elections in Indian-held Kashmir.

The charge, made by Ms. Bhutto at a news conference for foreign journalists here Saturday, is the latest in a regular exchange of accusations of sabotage and interference between the two countries, which have fought three wars since independence in 1947.

Ms. Bhutto provided no evidence to back up her claim, or was she asked to do so by the journalists.

Six people were killed in an explosion in the eastern city of Lahore on April 14 at former international cricket star Imran Khan's cancer hospital, preceding his entry into national politics.

A more devastating bomb blast on a crowded bus near Lahore on April 28 left some 52 people dead and dozens injured, sending a shock wave through the country.

Openly accusing India for the first time after the blasts in Punjab province, Ms. Bhutto told foreign reporters here Saturday that the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) of Indian intelligence was behind the explosions.

"All the reports that I have received indicate that the bombings are the work of RAW," she said.

Ms. Bhutto contended that the Indian intelligence carried out the blasts in a bid to divert attention from the upcoming "sham" elections in the Indian-held Kashmir.

Polls in India's only Muslim majority state — which is rocked by a separatist drive blamed by New Delhi on Pakistan — are to be held on May 7, 23 and 30 to elect six Kashmir representatives in the federal parliament.

Pakistan, which holds the northern third of Kashmir, denies material support to Kashmiri militants, but openly vows political and moral support to the separatist campaign it calls a legitimate self-determination struggle.

The two countries have fought two of their three wars since independence in 1947 over Kashmir, which is claimed by both.

Ms. Bhutto said earlier it was Karachi — the troubled Pakistani port city in southern Sindh province — where



Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto speaks to Islamabad-based foreign correspondents at her official residence (Reuters photo)

"raw-inspired" blasts were seen, adding that now they had turned their attention to the Punjab.

She also expressed concern over India's missile and nuclear programmes at the news conference, accusing it of pursuing "hegemonistic" designs in the region.

She said it was not India but Pakistan which had faced "aggression" from the neighbour three times in its history.

The Kashmir dispute could be resolved when India "recognises" it as a problem and agrees to negotiate a settlement, she said, adding that the region could then take strides towards economic and social development.

Ms. Bhutto said she had no "favourites" in the current elections in India, but would prefer that a person of vision and courage would emerge who could resolve the Kashmir dispute.

Yeltsin aide wants Russian poll delayed

LONDON (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin's influential security chief Alexander Korzhakov wants to postpone the June 16 election his boss is in danger of losing, Britain's Observer newspaper said Sunday. "A lot of influential people are in favour of postponing the elections and I'm in favour of it too because we need stability," the Observer quoted Mr. Korzhakov as telling its correspondent after a May Day rally last Wednesday.

As Kremlin security chief and top aide Mr. Korzhakov is known to be very close to Mr. Yeltsin, who is behind Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov in opinion polls leading up to the vote in almost six weeks.

Any delay in the elections would damage Russia's chances of becoming a mature democracy, put question marks over continuing international financial support and depress Mr. Yeltsin's Western supporters.

But the observer said Mr. Korzhakov, who has had little past contact with the press, wanted a delay to prevent unrest.

"If we have the elections there is no way of avoiding a fight," he said. "If Mr. Yeltsin wins, the radical opposition will rush into the streets claiming the results were falsified and there will be unrest. If Zyuganov wins, even if he wants to

take a centrist line, the same people won't let him and they'll scream."

The Observer said Mr. Yeltsin's spokesman Sergei Medvedev was taken aback when asked about Mr. Korzhakov's views and repeated the official line that the elections should take place as scheduled.

Mr. Yeltsin has said publicly on several occasions that the vote should take place as planned.

The newspaper said there appeared to be a growing desire within some Russian circles to circumvent the danger of a change of government by having the election postponed.

It quoted an open letter from 13 of Russia's biggest bankers and industrialists published on the front page of the Communist daily newspaper a week ago that warned whoever won the election would be ruling in the name of a "minority".

The new rulers would only be able to "confirm their power by means which lead to civil war", the Observer quoted the letter as saying.

The letter concluded with a threat, the Observer added.

"Russian entrepreneurs do have the necessary resources and will to influence the too unprincipled and uncompromising politicians," it said.

Noor Al Hussein Foundation
The National Music Conservatory
in cooperation with
Goethe Institut
presents

The German
Mandering String Quartet
and Nora Niggeling
in concert

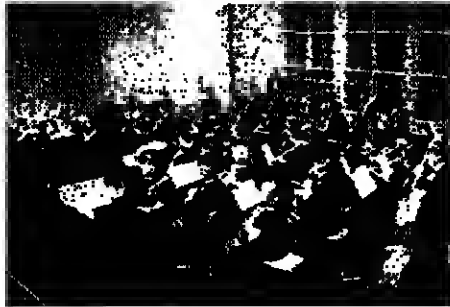


Saturday, 11 May 1996 - 8:00 p.m.
Royal Cultural Centre - Main Theatre
In the program pieces by Beethoven,
Zemlinski and Bruckner.

Ticket price: JD 10

Noor Al Hussein Foundation
The National Music Conservatory
in cooperation with
Marriott Hotel
presents

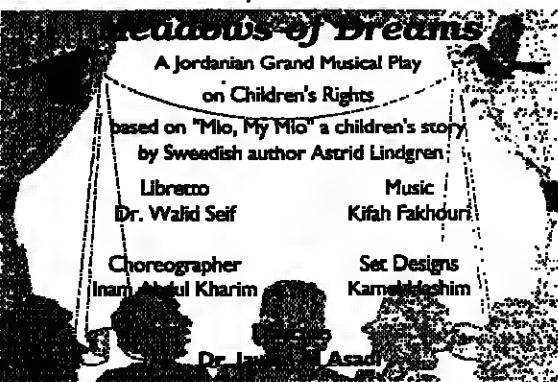
Brigham Young
Chamber Orchestra
(45 members)



Sunday, 12 May 1996 - 8:00 p.m.
Royal Cultural Centre - Main Theatre
In the program pieces by Mozart, Copland,
Ravel, Strauss and others.

Ticket Price: JD 10

Under the Patronage of Her Majesty
Queen Noor Al Hussein
The National Music Conservatory/Noor Al Hussein Foundation
in cooperation with
UNICEF
presents



A Jordanian Grand Musical Play
on Children's Rights
Based on "Mir, My Mir" a children's story
by Swedish author Astrid Lindgren;
Libretto: Dr. Walid Seif
Music: Kifah Fakhrudin
Choreographer: Inam Al-Hadad
Set Designs: Kamel Al-Hadad

Performances: Monday, 13 May, 8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, 14 May, 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday, 15 May, 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.
Thursday, 16 May, 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Al Hasan Bin Talal Auditorium - University of Jordan

JD 7 for adults and JD 5 for children

Tickets available at:
- Al-Ahla Superstore, tel. 688481
- Freddy for Music, tel. 692696
- Romero, tel. 644227

- Babiche, tel. 661322
- Goethe Institut, tel. 641993
- Royal Cultural Center, tel. 661026

- Caffé Moka, tel. 856285
- Marriott Hotel, tel. 607607
- National Music Conservatory, tel. 687620

- Characters, tel. 07-927106
- Music Box, tel. 815745

Marriott

IML

KOCHI
IMC Insurance Company Ltd. (JEC)

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975

Chairman of the Board of Directors:

MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:

MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,

University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 684311, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.

Subscription and advertising rates are available from the

Jordan Times advertising department.

Independence through law

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision to move fast on finalising the draft legislation on the establishment of the Centre for Human Rights, Democracy and Freedom Studies is an important step towards the institutionalisation of democracy in the Kingdom. The centre, whose establishment was ordered by His Majesty the King two years ago, could play an important role in developing democratic practices in the country and can deliver a vitally needed service at a time when many vague areas remain in the concept and practice of democracy in our country.

As the executive authority starts its belated debate of the two-year old draft law, it has to make sure that the legislation leads to the creation of an effective centre that can carry out its duties independently from the control of the government. The centre must be an independent authority guided by nothing but its concern for the promotion of democratic practices in Jordan. It should be given the legal authority to act in a manner that neutralises to a large extent the political and financial influence of the government. Otherwise, the centre will be yet another bureaucratic organ that will fail to fulfil its duty as a national institution concerned with the assertion of society's right to freedom and democracy.

But given the dearth of information available on the draft legislation, it is not possible to predict how much freedom the centre will be able to exercise in conducting its research and activities or what objectives the government foresees for it. That will only be clear when the government refers the draft law to parliament, which has the right to introduce whatever amendments it deems necessary to the law. Accordingly, the pressure for ensuring the suitability of the draft law to the purposes for which the centre should be created will fall on legislators. It is the duty of lawmakers to ensure that the government will not seize control of the centre and its activities through arming it with financial and administrative independence.

In what would be a first in Jordan, Parliament can, and must, insist that it has the legal right to confirm the appointment of the board of trustees after they are nominated by the government. Parliament can also insist that the director and the board are only accountable to the Legislature and their appointment can only be terminated by a majority decision of the Lower House. If that is done, those in charge of the centre will do their job more effectively and Jordanians can be certain that the centre for Human Rights, Democracy and Freedom Studies will be a worthy addition to the forces of pluralism and positive change in the country.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i said Sunday that the various non-Lebanon parties in the recent war in Lebanon have declared their satisfaction with the outcome of the conflict, but the unfortunate Lebanese have been left alone to heal their wounds and clear up the mess. Faded Faneek said that through the deal reached with the help of the U.S., Israel has succeeded in securing peace for its northern settlements. Syria has ended its isolation and secured worldwide recognition of its role in Lebanon. Hizbollah secured the right to carry out resistance attacks on Israeli military targets in southern Lebanon. Iran has expressed satisfaction with the deal which pleased Hizbollah, and France has resumed its historic role in the Middle East in general and in Lebanon in particular. For its part, the U.S. has proved once again that it is the sole power with sufficient influence on all sides and one that can force its will any time on all parties, even on Damascus which Washington considers as a country that fosters terrorism, and Israel which is the U.S. main ally in the region. According to the writer, the Lebanese are the only party that cannot claim any success from this war since it has witnessed hundreds of dead, the destruction of thousands of houses and they have to deal with thousands of displaced people. Moreover, he said, Lebanon remains under the hegemony of other countries.

Human Right File

Right to life still violated on our roads

By Waleed M. Sadi

ALL SO-CALLED civilised nations of the world have applied rigorous measures on car manufacturers in order to make their auto productions safer for drivers and passengers alike. Accordingly, vehicles are manufactured now with better than ever brake systems, stronger body shells and air bags to protect not only drivers but also all the passengers in case of head-on accidents.

In the same spirit, most advanced countries, i.e., countries which value human life and put high premium on safety on their highways and streets, refuse to license automobiles which do not have these additional safety fixtures. In other words, all the new safety technologies have become standard equipment and not luxury additions.

In the same vein, all new cars are produced to run on lead-free gasoline and with a built in catalytic converters to reduce car pollution, again to protect environment and, in turn, life.

Yet cars imported into our country and accepted for licensing even at this late hour are stripped of all these safety and environment-oriented technologies so that car importers could make an extra dollar of profit when they sell cars. If we truly value human life and human beings to the extent that we profess, why do we accept for our people so much less safety standards than other countries of the world?

When car makers across the face of the earth manufacture all new cars with all these safety features as standard equipment, why do we tolerate the import of new cars without such safety measures? And why are we so callous when it comes to environmental concerns as to still allow import of new cars which operate on leaded fuel at a time

when these cars are manufactured at the source to run on unleaded and environment-friendly fuel?

Fortunately, we now have a couple of gasoline stations in Amman which sell lead-free gas. There was hope that additional gasoline outlets would introduce this safer fuel as more cars are imported to use it. Unfortunately, all new cars imported in the country until now still operate on leaded gasoline. I wonder sometimes about all our pious talk about environment protection and safety on the road. Should we not have by now a standing policy to refuse import of vehicles which run on leaded fuel or lack basic safety features?

I thought we have effective associations for environmental protection and road safety. Why are they silent in the face of the continued flouting of human life and health in the country till now? Are our national associations on environment and road safety not aware that negligence and indifference in this context could turn into criminal negligence if they persist on shutting their eyes in the face of acknowledged dangers due to lax national policies on car standards?

Of course there will always be those among us who would argue that we cannot afford the new safety measures. How absurd can they be.

To begin with, there should not be a price tag on saving life or protecting health. No price is high enough to protect human life from the perils of leaded fuel or cars stripped of new safety equipment. Second, the shift to unleaded fuel on a gradual basis is not that expensive. Unleaded gasoline in countries of the world that use it abundantly is less expensive than leaded gasoline. What leaded gasoline

means in effect is that lead was added, at an extra cost, to the fuel to make combustion in engines smoother. Even if our national refinery can ill afford a total and immediate switch to producing unleaded fuel, there is no reason why it cannot gradually shift to unleaded fuel production if not for economic factors then for human life reasons.

As for production costs of cars with a catalytic converter for unleaded fuel, we must remember that all new cars are now manufactured with such a converter as standard equipment and stripping new cars of this feature may save car agents some money on car prices that they import, money that they and they alone would pocket at the expense of public interest; but this will add nothing to human health and safety.

It is high time, therefore, that our concerned authorities dealing with environment, road safety or import policies catch up with times and start applying policy directives that are already more than a decade old in other nations of the world.

Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti's white revolution would acquire an added depth and meaning if it starts to endorse new guidelines on the quality of life in the country, guidelines that have acquired the stature of law in most nations.

A ministerial committee could be established for this purpose to draw up new policy guidelines on vehicle imports and customs duties so that Jordan can catch up with international trends on matters affecting environment and road safety.

3 important elections on the eve of the millennium

By Gwynne Dyer

APRIL, MAY, June, India, Israel, Russia. Three elections that will determine the shape of the planet at the millennium.

A big claim, but not an exaggeration. Only the choice China makes after Deng Xiaoping's death begins to compare in importance with these three elections, and that is likely to be a prolonged period of bargaining than a single turn-of-the-card election.

You'd like a peaceful, stable Asia? Overlook the corruption and vote for Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao on April 27. You'd prefer peace to war in the Middle East? Ignore the explosions all over Lebanon and vote for Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres on May 29. You don't want the cold war back? Hold your nose and vote for Russian President Boris Yeltsin on June 16.

We are bound to reach this point sooner or later. When huge changes happen in the lives of entire peoples — like the opening up of the Indian economy, or the Israeli-Palestinian peace

process, or the collapse of Soviet communism — there is always an initial period of elation. And it is always followed by a backlash, when the cost of change becomes apparent.

The hardest election to call is in Russia, where Boris Yeltsin is seeking a second-term in office despite the fact that he has impoverished millions of Russians with his half-baked, corruption-riddled economic reforms and saddled the country with a stupid, unwinnable war in Chechnya.

Mr. Yeltsin's poll figures are looking up at the moment, but he cannot stop the war. Indeed, he can count on the Chechen guerrillas to launch some spectacular operation against Russia just in time to influence the vote against him. The Communists could win in Russia.

For Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres, on the other hand, Israeli bombers and gunships sewing death over Lebanon may win back the votes that Palestinian suicide bombers took away from him. Mr. Peres went into this election, the last before a permanent peace settlement is due to be signed with the Palestinians, with a seemingly unbeatable lead. But popular anger against the

Israeli right after last year's assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was soon overshadowed by anger at the Palestinian suicide bombers who killed over 60 Israelis last month.

Mr. Peres, unable to find any targets to retaliate against, was soon floundering in the polls. Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, who is committed to "freezing" the peace process (i.e. abandoning it), began to look like a winner. But then the mental giants of Hizbollah, an Iranian-backed Lebanese militia that also wants to destroy the peace process, decided that if a few suicide bombers had helped the cause, then a hail of Katyusha rockets would guarantee Netanyahu's victory.

Down came the Katyushas all over northern Israel, and suddenly Mr. Peres had a viable target: their bases in southern Lebanon. So now, at the cost of turning one-tenth of Lebanon's population into refugees, Mr. Peres has been able to show that he is ruthlessly tough in protecting Israel's security. Which is how you win votes in Israeli elections.

India's election, compared to the others, is almost sedate. But it is actually the most

important of all, because a prosperous, democratic future for one billion Indians is as crucial to the stability of Asia and the world as the more frequently discussed issue of China's future. And this is the make-or-break election for economic reform in India.

The reforms themselves are already well-underway: they were unleashed by Finance Minister Manmohan Singh in 1991 when Mr. Rao's government suddenly found itself unable to borrow any more abroad. And they have created a consumer boom in India that has finally pulled the country out of its traditional "Hindu growth rate." ("Two per cent economic growth, two per cent population growth. Result: perpetual misery.")

Now India's economic growth is starting to resemble that of its East and South-East Asian neighbours — and a great threat has begun to lift from the world. A poor, angry India, lagging far behind everyone else in Asia, would still have been big enough to be a lethal threat to the peace if it went ultra-nationalist. A prosperous, happy India is good for everybody.

But it's not happy and prosperous yet. As Eastern Euro-

peans can attest, the first few years after you abandon a centrally controlled economy can be very hard on the poor, and so it has been in India. So how does Mr. Rao's Congress Party win reelection?

Salvation has come, bizarrely, in the form of a corruption scandal so vast that it embraces the opposition as well. Mr. Rao has lost seven cabinet ministers who are charged with accepting kickbacks — but Lal Krishna Advani, leader of the right-wing, Hindu chauvinist Bharatiya Janata Party, and several leaders of the National Front-Left Front alliance have also been indicted.

The result will be a less calamitous defeat for Congress than was on the cards even six months ago. It will probably emerge as still the biggest party in the parliament, and form a coalition with the left-wing alliance. The reforms will continue (though more slowly), and the ultra-nationalists will be kept away from power.

A muddled but generally positive result in India: a likely narrow win for Mr. Peres in Israel; and a horse race in Russia. It could have been a lot worse.

India — 'do not panic yet'

By Gwynne Dyer

WHAT IS extraordinary is how calm everybody is. India is in the midst of an election that could wreck the country's economic miracle, threaten its unity and even drag the sub-continent back to war after a quarter-century of peace. Yet everybody acts as though it was just a normal election.

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao warns that if his Congress Party is replaced in power by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), "India could go the way of the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia." And it could happen, if the nationalists and Hindu chauvinists of the BJP attack the 120-million-strong Muslim minority at home, and perhaps blunder into a war with Pakistan in the process.

Did the Indians panic when Mr. Rao made his warning? No, they roundly denounced him for alarmism — and the Bombay Stock Exchange, already up 37 per cent this year, went right on rising.

Then Mani Mohan Joshi, general secretary of the BJP, denounced the U.S. for "turning a blind eye to the acquisition of nuclear arsenals by Pakistan from China" — a barefaced lie intended to cause panic. But did Indians panic? No, they turned out to vote peacefully in vast numbers.

Terrorist bombs have been wreaking havoc in both India and Pakistan lately — the ones in India probably the work of Kashmiri separatists, those in Pakistan most likely connected with the virtually civil war raging in Karachi, Pakistan's biggest city. But Indian right-wingers blame Pakistan for the bombs, and after the most recent blast in Pakistan killed 50 villagers in a rural town, Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto blamed India.

But Indians did not panic, of course, just patiently waited their turn as the election caravan moved around the country. Police and paramilitary forces are being shuffled around to ensure adequate security at the 800,000 polling stations, but it means that only about one-third of the population gets to vote at a time: April 27, May 2, May 7, and then vote-counting begins on the May 8.

It is a very impressive exercise in democracy, but it is also a puzzle. Don't these people understand that if the BJP comes to power, their old India is gone, and their new one will be an intolerant nationalist state locked into permanent confrontation with Muslim neighbours abroad and Muslim citizens at home?

Many Indians want exactly that, of course, and that is why they are voting for the BJP or its neo-fascist ally Shiv Sena. They are people who like the idea of an India that openly wields nuclear weapons, and are drawn to the idea of declaring India a Hindu nation, stamping on minority rights and ending special treatment for Dalits (who used to be called "untouchables").

Every country has such people: in the United States they are collectively known as "angry white men." But in India

their party of choice is leading in the opinion polls, and if it were to gain power, the consequences would be much more than just shutting down a few family-planning clinics.

There would certainly be endless confrontations. The new pattern of fast economic growth unleashed by Mr. Rao's dismantling of the old centrally controlled Indian economy could be crippled or derailed by the internal strife that would be certain under a BJP government. And there might be war.

So why are ordinary Indian voters so plainly not panicked? What do they know (or think they know) that we do not?

They know, for a start, that this election is not about the BJP winning. It is about Congress, which has dominated the Indian political scene since independence, losing its central position in Indian politics.

Like the Christian Democratic Party in Italy or the Liberal Democratic Party in Japan, Congress has had almost four decades in office with only a brief two-years interruption in its region. Well, the Christian Democrats are now gone completely, destroyed by corruption probes, and the Liberal Democrats are faltering badly. Why should Congress be any different?

What is emerging as Congress' grasp on power erodes out a monolithic Hindu fundamentalist party ready to take its place, but a whole array of competing political interests. Some line up along the familiar old left-right divide, bleeding votes away from Congress at both edges. Many others defend the interests of a single region, caste, or religious group — and they will be the real power-brokers in the new parliament.

The decline of the Congress mood is basically a very good thing for India. It managed, under Mr. Rao, to destroy the Fabian socialist system it had created itself many years before (and maybe it was the only force that could). But that was the last service the Congress Party could perform for the nation, and lacking a charismatic leader from the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty, it was bound to fall at the next hurdle.

India's complex, essentially federal politics (six major religions, 18 official languages) used to happen undemocratically inside the broad front of the Congress Party. Now this competition is moving out into the open, which is bound to upset people unused to Indian political leaders actually stating what they want. But this is democratisation, like it or not.

It is happening now because people have outgrown the Congress Party's desperate attempts to be all things to all people. Most Indian voters welcome this change, and are not frightened by it at all. They are probably right.

Whatever the balance in the new parliament, there will have to be a coalition government. And the BJP is unlikely to dominate the coalition even if it wins more votes than any other party: few of its rivals share its fundamentalist outlook on the world. India is mature enough to democratically fully without disaster. I think. If I am wrong, of course, then there will be anti-Muslim pogroms, nuclear weapons tests, confrontation and maybe even war with Pakistan. But do not panic yet.

LETTERS

Changing the self

To the Editor:

THE ARTICLE written by Dr. Majdoubeh "Our haphazardness and the need to address it" (Jordan Times, March 28, 1996) touched an open wound that has been festering inside of me and being exacerbated by the many examples around us touching just about every aspect of our quasi, pseudo-proud culture.

I apologise to those who will get offended by what might be, ostensibly, a harsh critique of the way many of us go about living, speaking, working, driving and parenting, among many other areas — too many to cover — without having the foggiest idea about how badly we perform and rate on the score sheet of civilised societies, when it comes to the things that really matter in life and make us, wholly, what we are.

If we are ever going to start dealing with the painful reality of what is wrong with our society, we have to begin by pulling our heads out of the cultural sand of taboos, lies, insecurities and fears of speaking out. We will have to begin by accepting the bare truth. If we do not start by recognising that we have major problems, stop denying them and come to believe them as facts and truths, any effort to shed a glimpse of light on our plight would be futile.

I and Dr. Majdoubeh, and the likes of him, whose daring, eye-opening and thought-provoking articles dare tap on the dark side of our haphazard culture and society which does not take even constructive criticism lightly or gracefully.

Let us have courage and admit that we are far from being perfect and that we got ahead of us a long, tedious road, filled with so much opposition to anyone who will dare to propose change. We have to start somewhere with the process of change — ourselves will be a good place and a great accomplishment — if we are to remedy the too many ills we are plagued with, for history is truthful to itself and will, in no way, accept our pathetic excuses.

Walid Maaytah,
Amman

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Muslims, Christians to hold forum on Jerusalem

CAIRO (AFP) — The Middle East Council of Churches said Sunday it would organise a Muslim-Christian conference on Jerusalem next month to support the Palestinian claim to the Holy City. The secretary general of the council, Riad Jarjur, held talks Sunday with Arab League chief Esmat Abdul Meguid on preparations for the forum to be held in Beirut. Mr. Jarjur told reporters the conference was originally planned for Cairo but was switched to Beirut "as a sign of solidarity with the Lebanese people after the Cana massacre and Israel's aggression against Lebanon." The conference, on the theme "Muslims and Christians together for Jerusalem," will aim to "consolidate the Arab position on the Holy City which must become the capital of the state of Palestine," Mr. Jarjur said. Arab League and Vatican representatives will take part, he said.

U.N. sanctions against Sudan unfair — Russia

KHARTOUM (AP) — Russia has criticised the U.N. Security Council's imposing of diplomatic sanctions against Sudan as hasty and said it will keep up ties with the country, the official Sudan News Agency (SUNA) reported Sunday. The comments of Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Posavalyuk were made in a message sent to Mustafa Osman Ismail, a minister of state in the government of President Omar Al Bashir, SUNA said. Russia abstained from the 13-0 vote last month when the council urged member states to "significantly reduce the number and level" of Sudanese diplomats abroad and to restrict those who remain. China also abstained. The sanctions go into effect May 10 if Sudan does not turn over three Egyptians who are believed to have fled to Sudan after a failed plot to kill Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak last June in Ethiopia. Sudan claims it cannot find the men.

PoW talks to go ahead on Kuwait-Iraq border

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwaiti and Iraqi officials will meet on the border between the two countries on Monday to attempt to uncover the fate of some 600 people Kuwait says were taken prisoner or are still missing since the Gulf war, the official news agency KUNA said. The regular monthly meetings, which will continue until September, have so far resulted in preliminary findings for 126 missing persons of a total of 602 files being discussed, according to officials close to the talks. Most of the files submitted concern Kuwaiti citizens, although between 30 or 40 files belong to third country nationals. Each meeting, which is supervised by the International Committee of the Red Cross, is held on alternate sides of the border. Monday's talks will go ahead on the Kuwaiti side.

Egypt releases three Italian fishing boats

ALEXANDRIA (AFP) — Egypt on Sunday released three Italian boats seized last month for fishing illegally in its waters, the Italian consulate here said. The Egyptian coastguard seized the three boats on April 16 off Salloum in northern Egypt, Corrado Gianturco, the Italian consul general, told AFP. The 18 crew members were fined 5,000 pounds (\$1,500) for each boat by an Egyptian court before they were allowed to leave, Mr. Gianturco said. "The three boats left Salloum for Sicily overnight Sunday," he said.

Iranian defence minister holds talks in Qatar

DOHA (AFP) — Iranian Defence Minister Mohammad Forouzandeh met here Sunday with the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, as part of a visit to highlight the ties between the two countries. Mr. Forouzandeh, who arrived late Saturday on an official visit, discussed with Qatar's Defence Minister Sheikh Hamad Bin Abdullah Al Thani, "boosting bilateral cooperation between the two brother countries and issues of mutual interest," the official Qatari agency (QNA) said. In an interview with the daily Al Raya, the Iranian minister stressed the "close ties" between the two countries and said "cooperation in the field of defence was possible" between Tehran and Doha.

Iran says Kabul embassy hit by rocket

LONDON (R) — The Iranian embassy in the battered Afghan capital of Kabul was badly damaged by rocket fire which slightly injured two staff members, the Iranian news agency (IRNA) said Sunday. IRNA, monitored in London, said the embassy building was hit on Saturday afternoon during heavy exchanges of fire between Afghan government forces and Taliban militia who have been besieging Kabul since October. IRNA said one person died and nine were injured in the capital during Saturday's fighting. It quoted Iranian Ambassador Gholamreza Haddadi as condemning the shelling of residential areas and the resulting heavy civilian casualties.

Spying for U.S., Israel means death in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — The Iranian parliament on Sunday approved a change to the law laying down the death sentence for anyone found guilty of spying especially for the United States and Israel. "People handing over confidential military, political, scientific or social information to foreigners, and above all the United States and Israel as well as the Iranian opposition will be condemned to death," the amendment read. The new article will be added to the Islamic republic's penal code which is based on the Islamic law, Sharia, and adopted in November. Under the new law, the state will be able to "seize all the property of the person sentenced for spying."

PNA jails Hamas activist for stabbing Jewish settler

GAZA CITY (AFP) — A Palestinian court on Sunday sentenced an activist to 12 years in prison with hard labour for stabbing a Jewish settler in the flashpoint West Bank city of Hebron, officials said.

"The high state court in Jericho found Iyad Mohamad Rifaat Salah, aged 22 from Hebron, guilty of violence endangering the peace process, violating the trust of the Palestinian people and undermining Palestinian economic, political and national security," Attorney General Khaled Al Qidrebi said.

"Salah was sentenced to 12 years with hard labour and the ruling was sent to President (Yasser) Arafat for approval," Mr. Qidrebi told AFP.

The attorney general said Salah was a militant in the Islamic resistance movement (Hamas). He was captured by Palestinian police in Beth-

lehem a day after he allegedly stabbed Jewish settler Nissim Goudai in the back with a butcher's knife in the Hebron market. Goudai was seriously hurt in the attack.

The stabbing came amid high tensions in Hebron, where Israeli troops are due to withdraw under the terms of Israeli-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) peace agreements.

Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres on Friday delayed the Israeli troop redeployment, which is already a month overdue, until after May 29 Israeli elections.

Settlers and Israeli religious conservatives vehemently oppose handing over Hebron to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), arguing that this will leave Jews in the city at the mercy of Palestinians.

Immediately after Wednesday's stabbing, Palestinian officials said the attack was a provocation designed to undermine the peace process.

Crucial issues to be resolved in final status talks

Agence France Presse

THE "FINAL status" negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians launched on Sunday in Tabá, Egypt will cover the thorniest issues in the whole Arab-Israeli conflict.

Under the 1993 declaration of principles on autonomy, the talks over the next three years aim to determine the status of Jerusalem and Jewish settlements, the fate of Palestinian refugees, and final borders.

The two sides' positions on the main issues are:

Palestinian state: The Palestinians want to found an independent state of their own at the end of a five-year period of autonomy in May 1999.

They demand sovereignty over all the Palestinian territories which Israel seized in 1967: the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the

Gaza Strip, which together cover an area of 6,170 square kilometres.

They base their claims on U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, passed in 1967 and 1973 respectively, to demand an Israeli withdrawal in return for peace.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in 1988 accepted the principle of a two-state solution in the former Palestine. It recognised the Jewish state five years later and then voted to scrap articles of its charter calling for Israel's destruction on April 24 this year.

Israel has refused to allow the Palestinians the right to self-determination. But on April 25, the ruling Labour Party lifted its veto against an independent Palestinian state. Prime Minister Shimon Peres favours a Jordanian-Palestinian federation.

Jerusalem: Israel rejects any

division of its "sovereignty" over the Holy City, considering it as its "eternal and indivisible" capital, despite a lack of international recognition. Under U.N. resolutions, East Jerusalem is recognised as an occupied territory.

The Palestinians want the eastern sector, home to 170,000 Arabs, as their own capital. Around the same number of Jews live in a string of settlements built since the 1967 war.

Palestinians account for 29.1 per cent of Jerusalem's total population of 580,000 people.

Refugees: The PLO wants a "just solution" for the return of refugees who left their lands inside present-day Israel during the first Arab-Israeli war of 1948, as well as their descendants.

They numbered 700,000 when the state of Israel was

founded, now they would amount to almost three million people, with the descendants.

U.N. General Assembly Resolution 194, dating back to 1948, recognises their right to return or at least compensation.

Israel rules out any such return of the 1948 refugees, most of whom live in exile in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. It has never accepted responsibility for their fate.

On the subject of compensation, Israeli officials have said any such negotiation should also cover the confiscated properties of Jews who fled Arab countries to settle in Israel.

The Jewish state has, however, agreed to discuss the Palestinians who fled from the West Bank in 1967 and their descendants. On March 7, 1985, a joint commission was set up for the 1967 refugees by Israel, the

Palestinians, Jordan and Egypt. It has yet to make any concrete progress.

Settlements: Since 1967, some 145,000 Jews have settled in almost 150 communities across the West Bank and Gaza, not including the 170,000 in East Jerusalem.

The PLO wants the settlements to be dismantled. But some Palestinian officials have said Jews who want to stay on would have to live under Palestinian rule.

Mr. Peres has said he aims to keep most of the settlements in place, under Israeli sovereignty.

Borders: The Palestinians want Israel to evacuate the territories up to the "green line," the armistice line drawn up in 1949 between the territories under Israel and Arab control after the previous year's war.

Mr. Peres has said he

wants to annex a part of the West Bank, notably around Jerusalem, along the green line, in the Jordan Valley, and northwest of the Dead Sea.

Security arrangements: Israel insists on keeping control of the Jordan Valley which it considers as its eastern "security border" and keeping the Palestinian entity disarmed. The Palestinians want back the whole of the territories occupied in 1967.

Water: Israel wants to keep maximum control over water resources in the territories, having seized them in 1968 as "state property."

The Palestinians, who want control of the same resources, use 250 million cubic metres of water a year, compared to two billion cubic metres for Israel which has a population twice as large.

Israel admits 'errors,' denies deliberate attack on Cana base

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel's top army commander admitted on Sunday that Israeli artillery gunners who shelled a U.N. camp in Lebanon last month committed "some errors," but he rejected a U.N. report that they deliberately targeted the compound, killing 102 refugees.

General Amnon Shahak, the army chief of staff, told the weekly cabinet meeting that the conclusions of a U.N. report into the incident which accused Israeli forces of deliberately shooting into the camp were "mistaken," according to an account of the meeting published by the state news agency Iam.

Several Israeli artillery shells slammed into the camp at Cana on April 18, in the midst of Israel's war against Hizbollah guerrillas in Lebanon.

Gen. Shahak reiterated the army version of the incident, saying that Israeli artillery were returning fire against Hizbollah guerrillas who were attacking Israeli positions from near the camp when "errant" shells landed on the compound.

"The artillery opened fire to cover Israeli soldiers whose lives were in danger from Hizbollah mortar and rocket fire from near the U.N. camp," he said.

But he acknowledged that "our soldiers committed some errors, notably by basing their (targeting) calculations on the centre of the U.N. camp."

"Other errors were committed in the initial reports made to the United Nations after the tragic incident,

which created an impression that we were trying to hide something," Iam quoted him as saying, without elaborating.

U.N. sources last week said that a preliminary report by Gen. Frank Van Kappen, who was sent to investigate the Cana shelling, concluded that the Israeli artillery battery knew it was targeting the U.N. compound.

Gen. Van Kappen's report, which, according to U.N. officials, has not yet been finalised pending "clarifications" expected from the Israeli army, also reveals that Hizbollah guerrillas and their families were sheltering in the camp.

On Saturday government spokesman Uri Dromi rejected the U.N. charges.

"The report says that we deliberately struck Lebanese civilians but doesn't give any proof," he said.

"As far as we are concerned our inquiries found that we did not know of the presence of the civilians in this area, so close to Hizbollah firing."

The shelling of the camp where 800 civilians were sheltering from the Israeli onslaught led to international outrage and spurred diplomatic efforts which finally resulted in a ceasefire.

The head of Hizbollah has vowed to avenge the Cana shelling, a British newspaper reported.

Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah told the "Independent on Sunday" that his men would abide by truce terms banning attacks on civilians which ended the Israeli bombardment of Lebanon.

But the eight-day-old ceasefire did not outlaw attacks on Israeli forces in their occupation zone in South Lebanon, Sheikh Nasrallah said.

"We are going to take revenge on the Israeli armed forces they were responsible for killing our people in Cana and they occupy our land," he told the Independent during an interview at Hizbollah headquarters in southern Beirut.

Sheikh Nasrallah said Hizbollah had defeated Israel in the fighting since it lost only 14 fighters and the Jewish state had failed in its objective of quashing the guerrilla movement.

"Had it not been for the massacre of women and children, we would have had the right to rejoice over our victory. But because of them, we have to say this is a sad victory."

Sheikh Nasrallah said he did not expect the ceasefire's safeguarding of civilians to last.

"I feel that the military people in Israel are not satisfied with this understanding and will not respect it. As for us, we are going to comply because it protects our civilians."

In a jibe at Washington's warm support for Israel, the Hizbollah leader claimed U.S. President Bill Clinton personally decided Israel should launch the assault against South Lebanon.

He contended that the decision was made at the anti-terrorism summit at Sharm Al Sheikh in Egypt on March 13.

Government reiterates intention

(Continued from page 12)

and foreign satellite stations programmes, he said.

The government has realised that its information agencies have become unable to cater to the needs of the modern age under the present system and it is now trying to reduce its role in them and giving their management to boards which group private and the public sectors hoping that their performance will improve, he added.

But he stressed that this does not mean privatising the radio and television in one go but a step on the road since full privatisation at this stage is not possible.

In a paper on press management, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Jordan Press Foundation Mahmoud Al Kayed dealt with such issues as press property, status of press management in Jordan, relationship between press management and the government and the difference between a press management and the management of any other institutions. Mr. Kayed said press management is a thorny and difficult subject in the sense that management of any factory or institution follows certain rules and regulations governing its work, while the press management does not follow such rules and regulations in view of the role it plays as an independent people's body carrying its mission freely in serving the society and reflecting the public opinion, and shaping it in light of the society's main constituents.

Mr. Kayed noted that the first line of authority in the press should be aware of the

social, economic and political situation in the country and should be knowledgeable of the general situations, including attitudes, party affiliations and the various associations and organisations.

This knowledge is needed to facilitate the mission of the press in addressing the needs and demands of people from the various walks of life, Mr. Kayed said.

A successful newspaper is the one that produces a newspaper where readers can satisfy their needs, away from factionalism, narrow mindedness and ethnicity, he said.

"My vast experience as the first line manager in Al Rai newspaper has taught me that responsibility is a message and a goal and that a true manager should try his best to win his colleagues' confidence and should involve them in the decisionmaking process and encourage them to take part in any initiatives and should strive to develop a sense of ownership in each one of them, Mr. Kayed said.

He stressed the importance of publishing a unique and committed newspaper by carrying objective and daring articles, and comments and selecting writings and articles that meet the taste of readers, and by standing by the right and justice.

On relations between the newspaper and the government, Mr. Al Kayed said: "The relation differs from time to time. However, an independent newspaper does not accept to take sides with any government or prime minister or minister. A newspaper management may differ with a government or minister or a group of ministers or senior officials, but

the difference should not undermine the country's national web, nor its national role."

Mr. Kayed described relations with governments as the ebb and tide, and attributed the reason to differing views. However, he said, a successful newspaper maintains good relations with the government if it wants to have a unique presence.

On the status of press and media in Jordan, Dr. Jawad Anani, a former minister of information, said: "Despite the openness to the world and the ceiling of freedom, Jordanian media has not reached the aspired standards if compared with Arab or Israeli media."

Official media, particularly television, have become no longer attractive to the public, and people have started looking for other alternative media, Dr. Anani said. He noted that the improvement in news and information coverage had not been matched with an improvement in the recreational and innovative aspects of the information field. Therefore, Dr. Anani added: "Our media in general and the official media in particular have lost its competitive features."

Political analyses, Dr. Anani said, form an inseparable part of information, noting that the hundreds of weekly analyses done by specialised writers were not having an effect on people. "It is useful to undertake field studies in a bid to identify the right formulas for commentators, Dr. Anani said. He noted that the large number of qualified and competent columnists do not shape public opinion or even direct it.

Activists plan congress to 'protect' Palestinian rights

By Lima Nabil
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A group of prominent Jordanian and Palestinian lawyers, politicians and trade union members have announced the creation of an ad hoc committee for the Congress of Return and Self-Determination for the Palestinian people expected to be held in early 1997.

Member of the preparatory committee Labib Kambawi, who made the announcement at a press conference, said participants in the congress, whose venue is still undetermined, will be Palestinians from inside Palestine and the diaspora and supporters from Arab and foreign countries which back the Palestinian people's quest to return to Palestine and establish their independent state in their own homeland.

Dr. Kambawi said: "The preparatory committee intends to hold a meeting in the coming week in Washington to prepare for the congress and will immediately start collecting the signatures of thousands of Palestinians and of thousands of other Arabs in affirmation of the bonds between the Palestinian people and their Arab brethren and of the basic national rights which should never be compromised."

The preparatory committee, which includes such prominent personalities like George Abed, Clovis Mak-soud and Mohammad Sharabi, does not serve as a substitute for the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). "It is as an organisation determined to defend the rights of Palestinian people in the diaspora, who constitute 50 per cent of the total number of Palestinian people, to return to their homeland and to keep the Palestine question alive regardless of the treaties which have been concluded and which disregard the inalienable Palestinian rights," said Dr. Kambawi.

"The Palestinians in the diaspora stress that no one including the PLO has the right to cede or tamper with the Palestinian people's legitimate rights," he added.

The 1997 congress, is expected to be held in an Arab country, will come up with an organisational framework that intends to protect the Palestinian people's rights and "is a serious effort to put an end to attempts to abandon the Palestinian people's rights, according to the committee."

Dr. Kambawi said the idea of the congress was born among the Palestinians living in the United States who "have noticed that the peace process in the Middle East has ignored their rights."

In a statement the preparatory committee said: "There can no longer be any doubt that a settlement based on the agreements that have been and are still being concluded between Israel and the Palestinian leadership can only lead to the following results:

— Official Palestinian recognition of Israeli sovereignty over all Palestinian territory and the deletion of the Palestinian question from the international agenda.

— Suppression of the basic national rights of the Palestinian people, most notably the right of self-determination and right to return.

— Total Israeli control over Jerusalem and settlements.

— Reduction of the Palestinian people to the status of residents in their own land and their isolation from Palestinians in the diaspora.

— An official Palestinian cover for Israeli penetration of the Arab World.

"The Palestinian people will neither consent to nor participate in this kind of settlement," stressed the statement. "Our pressing national obligation is not to acquiesce in such a fait accompli as though it were an irreversible act of fate."

"Our national duty is to challenge the current state of affairs and to change it regardless of the obstacles and notwithstanding our modest and symbolic first steps," the statement said.

"Let us convene a general Palestinian congress to be called the Congress of Return and Self-Determination in which Palestinians from inside and outside Palestine may participate, putting aside partisan, ideological and individual differences in order to forge a unifying Palestinian movement capable of standing in the face of continued Zionist aggression and of regaining full Palestinian rights," the statement said.

Reports from Cairo said that during his talks with the EU envoys, Mr. Mubarak denounced the military cooperation agreements signed last week between Israel and the U.S.

Mr. Mubarak told the troika that "the huge military support given to Israel created a dangerous and unbalanced situation and stabbed the credibility of the atmosphere of peace."

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, who also met with the EU team, accused the EU for not having played a large enough role in diplomatic efforts to push the peace process and "create the right conditions for a durable peace" and stressed on the importance of the EU's role in the reconstruction of Lebanon.

Ms. Agnelli is visiting Beirut today before she returns to Italy to report to European foreign ministers on the sidelines of a Mediterranean forum meeting which will be held next Thursday and will discuss Euro-Mediterranean issues along with ways of boosting the Middle East peace process.

Ms. Agnelli, whose country currently holds the six-month EU presidency, is heading the troika, which includes Irish Foreign Minister Gay Mitchell, representing the future Irish presidency, Spanish Secretary of State Emilio Fernandez Castano, representing the immediately past Spanish presidency, and Director General of the European Commission Juan Pratt.

The troika launched its current Middle East tour aimed at supporting the revitalisation of peace process on Saturday, one week after the ceasefire in Lebanon.

Referring to the U.S. refusal to back a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel for its attacks on Lebanon, Ms. Agnelli said that "Israelis and Americans are very close, but Europe can help achieve a more balanced attitude of the world toward the region."

Describing the April 27 ceasefire in Lebanon as "the American peace," the Italian minister said it was "a good one, provided they (the Americans) manage to make it a durable peace."

"Until now, it is a truce," she said, "and we think there should be a real peace."

In Cairo earlier in the day, Ms. Agnelli said after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that she shared President Mubarak's "feeling of injustice" due to the fact that "on the part of the U.S., there has been too much bending towards Israel and not enough towards Lebanon."

Ms. Agnelli, whose country currently holds the six-month EU presidency, is heading the troika, which includes Irish Foreign Minister Gay Mitchell, representing the future Irish presidency, Spanish Secretary of State Emilio Fernandez Castano, representing the immediately past Spanish presidency, and Director General of the European Commission Juan Pratt.

The troika launched its current Middle East tour aimed at supporting the revitalisation of peace process on Saturday, one week after the ceasefire in Lebanon.

Referring to the U.S. refusal to back a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel for its attacks on Lebanon, Ms. Agnelli said that "Israelis and Americans are very close, but Europe can help achieve a more balanced attitude of the world toward the region."

Describing the April 27 ceasefire in Lebanon as "the American peace," the Italian minister said it was "a good one, provided they (the Americans) manage to make it a durable peace."

"Until now, it is a truce," she said, "and we think there should be a real peace."

In Cairo earlier in the day, Ms. Agnelli said after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that she shared President Mubarak's "feeling of injustice" due to the fact that "on the part of the U.S., there has been too much bending towards Israel and not enough towards Lebanon."

Ms. Agnelli, whose country currently holds the six-month EU presidency, is heading the troika, which includes Irish Foreign Minister Gay Mitchell, representing the future Irish presidency, Spanish Secretary of State Emilio Fernandez Castano, representing the immediately past Spanish presidency, and Director General of the European Commission Juan Pratt.

The troika launched its current Middle East tour aimed at supporting the revitalisation of peace process on Saturday, one week after the ceasefire in Lebanon.

Referring to the U.S. refusal to back a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel for its attacks on Lebanon, Ms. Agnelli said that "Israelis and Americans are very close, but Europe can help achieve a more balanced attitude of the world toward the region."

Describing the April 27 ceasefire in Lebanon as "the American peace," the Italian minister said it was "a good one, provided they (the Americans) manage to make it a durable peace."

"Until now, it is a truce," she said, "and we think there should be a real peace."

In Cairo earlier in the day, Ms. Agnelli said after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that she shared President Mubarak's "feeling of injustice" due to the fact that "on the part of the U.S., there has been too much bending towards Israel and not enough towards Lebanon."

Ms. Agnelli, whose country currently holds the six-month EU presidency, is heading the troika, which includes Irish Foreign Minister Gay Mitchell, representing the future Irish presidency, Spanish Secretary of State Emilio Fernandez Castano, representing the immediately past Spanish presidency, and Director General of the European Commission Juan Pratt.

The troika launched its current Middle East tour aimed at supporting the revitalisation of peace process on Saturday, one week after the ceasefire in Lebanon.

Referring to the U.S. refusal to back a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel for its attacks on Lebanon, Ms. Agnelli said that "Israelis and Americans are very close, but Europe can help achieve a more balanced attitude of the world toward the region."

Describing the April 27 ceasefire in Lebanon as "the American peace," the Italian minister said it was "a good one, provided they (the Americans) manage to make it a durable peace."

"Until now, it is a truce," she said, "and we think there should be a real peace."

In Cairo earlier in the day, Ms. Agnelli said after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that she shared President Mubarak's "feeling of injustice" due to the fact that "on the part of the U.S., there has been too much bending towards Israel and not enough towards Lebanon."

Ms. Agnelli, whose country currently holds the six-month EU presidency, is heading the troika, which includes Irish Foreign Minister Gay Mitchell, representing the future Irish presidency, Spanish Secretary of State Emilio Fernandez Castano, representing the immediately past Spanish presidency, and Director General of the European Commission Juan Pratt.

The troika launched its current Middle East tour aimed at supporting the revitalisation of peace process on Saturday, one week after the ceasefire in Lebanon.

Referring to the U.S. refusal to back a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel for its attacks on Lebanon, Ms. Agnelli said that "Israelis and Americans are very close, but Europe can help achieve a more balanced attitude of the world toward the region."

Describing the April 27 ceasefire in Lebanon as "the American peace," the Italian minister said it was "a good one, provided they (the Americans) manage to make it a durable peace."

"Until now, it is a truce," she said, "and we think there should be a real peace."

In Cairo earlier in the day, Ms. Agnelli said after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that she shared President Mubarak's "feeling of injustice" due to the fact that "on the part of the U.S., there has been too much bending towards Israel and not enough towards Lebanon."

Ms. Agnelli, whose country currently holds the six-month EU presidency, is heading the troika, which includes Irish Foreign Minister Gay Mitchell, representing the future Irish presidency, Spanish Secretary of State Emilio Fernandez Castano, representing the immediately past Spanish presidency, and Director General of the European Commission Juan Pratt.

The troika launched its current Middle East tour aimed at supporting the revitalisation of peace process on Saturday, one week after the ceasefire in Lebanon.

Referring to the U.S. refusal to back a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel for its attacks on Lebanon, Ms. Agnelli said that "Israelis and Americans are very close, but Europe can help achieve a more balanced attitude of the world toward the region."

Describing the April 27 ceasefire in Lebanon as "the American peace," the Italian minister said it was "a good one, provided they (the Americans) manage to make it a durable peace."

"Until now, it is a truce," she said, "and we think there should be a real peace."

In Cairo earlier in the day, Ms. Agnelli said after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that she shared President Mubarak's "feeling of injustice" due to the fact that "on the part of the U.S., there has been too much bending towards Israel and not enough towards Lebanon."

Ms. Agnelli, whose country currently holds the six-month EU presidency, is heading the troika, which includes Irish Foreign Minister Gay Mitchell, representing the future Irish presidency, Spanish Secretary of State Emilio Fernandez Castano, representing the immediately past Spanish presidency, and Director General of the European Commission Juan Pratt.

The troika launched its current Middle East tour aimed at supporting the revitalisation of peace process on Saturday, one week after the ceasefire in Lebanon.

Referring to the U.S. refusal to back a U.N. Security Council resolution condemning Israel for its attacks on Lebanon, Ms. Agnelli said that "Israelis and Americans are very close, but Europe can help achieve a more balanced attitude of the world toward the region."

Describing the April 27 ceasefire in Lebanon as "the American peace," the Italian minister said it was "a good one, provided they (the Americans) manage to make it a durable peace."

"Until now, it is a truce," she said, "and we think there should be a real peace."

In Cairo earlier in the day, Ms. Agnelli said after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak that she shared President Mubarak's "feeling of injustice" due to the fact that "on the part of the U.S., there has been too much bending towards Israel and not enough towards Lebanon."

Ms. Agnelli, whose country currently holds the six-month EU presidency, is heading the troika, which includes Irish Foreign Minister Gay Mitchell, representing the future Irish presidency, Spanish Secretary of State Emilio Fernandez Castano, representing the immediately past Spanish presidency

Offset projects seen vital for Saudi economy

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Offset programmes introduced by Saudi Arabia a decade ago have become vital for its attempts to diversify the economy and lessen reliance on volatile oil earnings, an offset adviser said Sunday.

Mark Sandusky, chief adviser to the Saudi economic offset programme (EOP), said the Gulf kingdom had introduced the scheme with the aim of attracting direct foreign investment and acquiring technology.

"Offset programmes are crucial for economies such as Saudi Arabia's that must survive for economic diversification and not just growth," he said in a study presented to a regional offset conference in Abu Dhabi.

"This is a key objective of the Saudi offset programme. Perhaps most important is the increased

development of the Saudi private sector, he pointed out.

"Saudi Arabia was the first Arab Gulf state to introduce offset programmes, which require foreign arms suppliers to reinvest part of the deal's value in local productive projects that are jointly owned with Saudis."

Officials in Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil supplier, and its Gulf neighbours hope such ventures will help them acquire the technology necessary to their efforts to diversify sources of income.

The Saudi offset programme, the biggest in the Middle East, currently includes contractors from France, Britain and the United States.

The three Western countries, the main weapons exporters to the region, have committed themselves to offset ventures in the

kingdom under major arms contracts involving frigates and fighter jets.

According to Mr. Sandusky, director of Carlyle Group, the official adviser to EOP, Britain's offset commitment to Saudi Arabia is estimated at around \$1.5 billion under their Al Yamama aircraft deal. Another \$250 million was committed by the U.S. Hughes Aircraft Company under their 1994 deal involving the supply of aircraft systems.

Mr. Sandusky gave no figures on the offset commitment by the French Thomson-CSF, the government-owned French defence contractor. But he added their deal Al Sawari, which covers the supply of frigates and associated equipment and facilities for the Saudi navy, was governed by offset terms.

He said other offset ventures would be implemented by the U.S. telecommunications giant AT and T and other Western firms.

So far, EOP has approved ventures in electronics, aircraft repair and overhaul, turbine engine overhaul and repair, computer services, pharmaceuticals and food processing, he said.

He said several offset projects had been completed while other ventures were in the "pre-implementation stage." Mr. Sandusky put the total value of the implemented offset ventures at around \$350 million.

"Saudi Arabia has gained numerous benefits from the offset programme, including the transfer of technological know-how through research, development, manufacturing and production process, the

manufacture of products which substitute for imports and the creation of industries that enhance and support Saudi Arabian economic infrastructure," he said.

"However, there is an increased need for more quality, high-value employment opportunities than the still predominantly oil-based economy can provide. The challenge to generate such high-value jobs faces Saudi Arabia and other states of the Arabian Gulf."

He said the private sector, the focus of the Saudi government's reforms, should play a key role in offset programmes to diversify industries.

"With the need to achieve the strategic objectives of the kingdom, offset can be a critically significant means to meet these goals," he concluded.

Hope for rebirth of U.N trade group

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The U.N.'s trade and development conference is set for rebirth under South Africa's leadership, with consensus starting to replace the body's old confrontational style, delegates have said.

"There were fears in the run-up to the meeting that it would deteriorate into the old UNCTAD of confrontation and that the United States and the European Union (EU) were out to emasculate the organisation," said Xavier Carim, a member of the South African delegation to the ninth UNCTAD conference.

"But it's on track," he said.

The U.S. feels that South Africa has the muscle to urge developing countries to confront their own shortcomings and abandon their previous "victim mentality".

"The South African presidency is just what UNCTAD needed right now because it has credibility on both sides of what has been a development divide," said a delegate from an EU country.

There has been much support among delegates for proposed UNCTAD help for less developed countries to prepare for World Trade Organisation (WTO) talks.

Until now, developed countries have wanted trade talks restricted to the WTO forum, but they now say most developing countries need preparation for the negotiations.

"One of the problems with the Uruguay Round (of tariffs and trade talks) was that many countries didn't know what they were signing. Some feel they got their fingers burnt. You can't engage in proper negotia-

tions if you don't understand what your interests are," Mr. Carim said.

Developing countries want UNCTAD's help to ensure this does not happen again.

"What the developed countries seem to want is for UNCTAD to give these countries technical help to fulfil their current trade obligations. The situation for many is that they have committed to agreements, without the capacity to fulfil them."

Mr. Carim said UNCTAD's role was evident in WTO talks on a telecommunications agreement in Geneva.

"Developing countries have not signed it because they don't know what the issues are, the talks are stalled. UNCTAD can help push the WTO agenda forward," he added.

Mr. Carim said it was fair to say UNCTAD "turned the corner" at the conference, but industrialised countries were suspending judgement until they see what happens over the next four years.

He said South African Trade and Industry Minister Alec Erwin, whose assumed his portfolio only three weeks ago, was making UNCTAD a priority.

Mr. Erwin's blunt style has gone down well at the conference, winning over the more sceptical developed countries and with widespread private canvassing of delegates, has also given confidence to developing countries.

The second week of the conference will see groups planning strategies over trade and development, enterprise

development, competition and UNCTAD's future structure.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, MAY 6, 1996

By Thomas S. Plerson, Astrologer, Carroll Flight Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Try not to ask favours of bigwigs in the morning today, and later this evening you may have to change your plans. Do not act impulsively on any decisions which are business related without careful consideration.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Handle your career activities quickly and get much completed in the morning today, but later this evening be careful in handling any public or civic affairs which come up, otherwise there could be difficulties in the coming days.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Try to keep out of a disagreement today between the top person and a fellow associate and everything will be well. Later this evening, avoid one who could cause difficulties in your life and then you can be successful.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Your career activities may seem dull at this time, but carry through with them and later this evening you can look into some new interesting projects which attract your attention and when completed will make you successful.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You may find it difficult to get your talents working properly in the morning today, and later this evening you may try to make some wrong changes, however do not make any rash decision which could be disastrous.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) The conditions at home today may not be ideal, so figure out how best to improve them. Being of concern is not the answer, be logical in your method of operation and you see that everything will be prosperous.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You need not answer communications of any kind in the morning today since you may be under pressure and need to think carefully. Later this evening you can be with good friends and loved ones for some good times.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You have many ideas about money in the morning today, however sift them well so that you use only the best. You should confer with experts later this evening and ask for any suggestion which are appropriate.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) In the morning today you may feel indifferent, however you suddenly become so energetic that you can act too hastily for your own good. Later this evening is good for spending some good times with your loved ones.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You may find it hard to reach your goals today, however, if you try to force the issue, you could make some big mistakes. Later tonight you can meet a bigwig who has some good ideas for your success.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You may feel lonely today, however, it is better to have only good friends or loved ones around, so wait for them since they may be busy at this time. A new project is under consideration which will be beneficial to your success.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You may get a slow start in the morning today, however, ride it out. Keep promises you have made to others and try to control your temper or you could be in difficult situations, which are not beneficial.

Birthstone of May: Emerald — Citrine

JORDAN TIMES

TEL: 699634/684311

Countries in eastern Europe post various degrees of development

SOFIA (R) — Six years after the fall of the Berlin wall, countries that were once united by the thread of centrally planned economies are now having to face up to the fact that some are more equal than others.

Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland have succeeded in privatising large sections of their economies and are well on the way to recovering the production which was lost as they swallowed the bitter medicine of market reforms.

Laggards like Romania and Bulgaria on the other hand are stuck in the slow lane and the state still controls vast tracts of the economy.

"Ten years ago, if you

looked at the Czechs and Bulgarians you would not have seen much difference between their economies. Now the Czech (Republic) is more similar to western Europe and the gulf has widened," Czech Finance Minister Ivan Kocarnik told Reuters.

At the fifth annual meeting of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in the Bulgarian capital of Sofia, the statistics show exactly how wide that gap is.

The Czech economy is around 90 per cent in the size it was in 1991 and the country's gross domestic product is growing at 5.5 to six per cent a year, while Bulgaria lags on 78 per cent and is struggling to make three per

cent growth a year. The Bulgarian capital shows the brutal scars of Stalinist architecture and its telecommunications links and infrastructure are showing their age.

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are carping over the pace of reform as a price of their support in a programme which could be worth up to \$800 million to the country.

As analyst Stuart Parkinson of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell wryly commented in a report on the country, "the only real development in Bulgaria in the last three months has been the passage of time."

On privatisation, the process of transformation has

hardly started with just 1.75 million Bulgarians — less than 30 per cent of the eligible population — having bought into the country's voucher programme so far.

Only 534 state companies out of thousands have been sold, yielding proceeds of some \$700 million.

Desperately needed foreign investment has failed to arrive in countries such as Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia and Russia as well as the republics of central Asia, often due to confusion over local rules but also because the political will for reform is often lacking.

The political chairman of Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar was cited by U.S. rating agency Standard Poors as a prime reason for the lack of foreign investment.

In Russia, the prospect of a communist president allied to a communist parliament has alarmed foreign investors and

the country garnered just \$2.0 billion of foreign direct investment in 1995 out of a total of \$12.5 billion for the region, according to World Bank figures.

"It is foolish to think of Russia's communists as the caddy reforming type you have in Poland and Hungary," said one banker at the meeting.

"Those guys have the will to return the country to Stalinism," he said.

For the Czechs, and others who have completely embraced reform, the question is not "if" but "when" their population will reap the gains.

"I expect the difference in per capita gross domestic product between the Czechs and western Europe will successively diminish. At the moment our figure is 54 per cent that of Austria, in five years it will be 70-75 per cent," Mr. Kocarnik said.

GCC power grid to save \$752 m

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states will save around \$752 million when they link their electricity networks in a single grid as part of economic integration, a Gulf official said in press remarks Sunday.

Khaled Al Khan, undersecretary of the Bahraini ministry of electricity and water, said the grid linking the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states would cost around \$1.9 billion.

"This project will reduce

the costs of power generation in the GCC by \$2.672 billion. After deducting the cost of the project, this means there will be a net saving of \$752 million", he told the United Arab Emirates (UAE) weekly, Al Eqtisadi.

He did not give details of the project but said the Kuwaiti-based Gulf Investment Corporation (GIC) would present proposals on financing.

GIC, owned by the six GCC governments, had found

the project feasible following a study of more than a year.

It has two phases — the first covers Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar while the second will link Oman and the UAE.

The joint grid has been on the cards for several years but was delayed for technical and political reasons, according to official sources.

The grid will eventually be connected to a greater power network linking most of the Arab League's 22 members.

THE Daily Crossword by Melvin Kenworthy

ACROSS

- 1 Fluent
- 5 Hacienda room
- 9 Gentle as —
- 14 "I could — horse"
- 15 Selves
- 16 Ave —
- 17 Sts
- 18 Pungent fruit
- 20 Unusual
- 21 Participial suffix
- 22 Sonnet part
- 23 General at Gettysburg
- 25 Malayan dagger
- 26 Knee bone
- 29 West
- 30 Together
- 31 Tear
- 32 Italian island
- 36 Game animal
- 40 Seines
- 41 Numero —
- 42 Bizarre
- 43 Secret agent
- 44 Jazz performers of the '40s
- 46 Scat!
- 50 Sorceress
- 51 Of a terminal: var.
- 52 Enzyme: suff.
- 53 Adopt
- 57 Small oysters
- 58 Wild goat
- 60 Have an — the ground
- 61 Bonds
- 62 Greek flask
- 63 Phoenician city of old
- 64 Poet Teasdale
- 65 Earns

DOWN

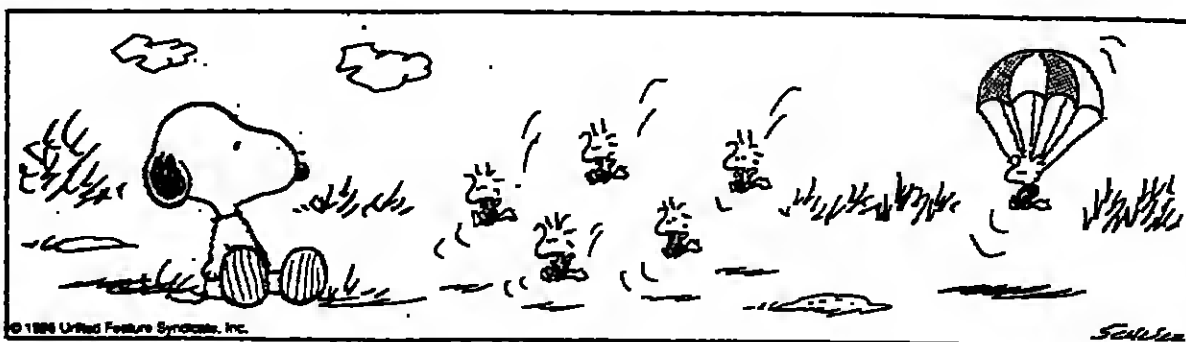
- 1 Equipment
- 2 Ema output
- 3 Roman highway
- 4 Cellars
- 5 Kind of story
- 6 Meeting program
- 7 Resort hotel
- 8 Ophidian
- 9 Electric unit
- 10 Slip
- 11 Mountain ridge
- 12 Sinks in mud
- 13 Sew loosely
- 19 Flee
- 24 Robert —
- 26 Chess piece
- 27 Wimbledon winner, once
- 28 Go — (begin at once)
- 29 Wire measure
- 31 — Grande
- 32 Learning
- 33 "I — song..."
- 34 Ernie's pal
- 35 Greek war god
- 37 Tree with light
- 38 Some wood
- 39 Jerk
- 43 Attachable, in a way
- 44 "The Scarlett Letter" heroine
- 45 Old Turkish city
- 46 "in Toyland"
- 47 Chou —
- 48 Calabash
- 49 "— Billy Joe"
- 50 Craze
- 54 Proficient
- 55 Retained
- 56 Former spouses
- 58 "— a boy!"

SCIENCE BRIAG SAISR
PLAIN LINE ECCE
AISLE OLDS ALIAR
ROY MONEYTOBURN
SPIED UTE
PATTER CORTAGE
ARRAS CAMEO REF
AGEIS CONES PAIRE
RUE GOLIAR ALVIN
ETERNAL PLAYED
LAS TREINT
COOLMILLION REM
LUGE DEAL COATTI
ACER EVIL OVINE
WHEY RIOS NAINAS

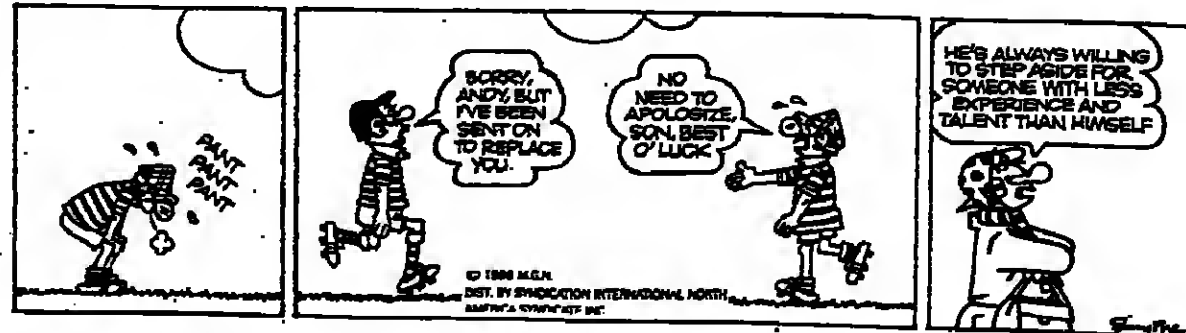
THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Moody's upbeat about Israeli banking system

LONDON (R) — Israel's banking system, bolstered by economic growth and subdued inflation, has received a cautious thumbs-up from rating agency Moody's Investors Service.

Moody's said its long-term outlook for Israel's banking system was positive. But this view was "constrained by a need for caution in the face of possible economic overheating and the continuing competitive pressures among the banks".

In a report, Moody's said: "The transition of the Israeli

economy away from central planning and economic paternalism and towards a more market-oriented policy environment should ultimately benefit Israel's banking system."

It said banks were no longer required to make loans to particular industries, nor were they expected to support economically unviable borrowers, such as the agricultural cooperatives and municipal authorities.

Israel's banking system will continue to be dominated by five major banking

groups, Moody's said, but they will have a harder time increasing their market share.

"Current moves to force banks to divest some of their subsidiaries will curtail the larger banks' ability to increase market share further. In some cases, the need to divest may affect earnings," Moody's said.

The report said the government's plans to sell strategic stakes in the banks it owns will be less than might normally be expected from a privatisation

programme since the government has already been exercising its control at arm's length.

It also said the willingness of the Israeli authorities to support banks facing difficulties was unlikely to be diminished as a result of the reduction in government ownership.

But the report said: "Strong economic growth and the conquest of inflation provide a healthy basis on which to develop banking business."

China shifts state firms to private management

BEIJING (R) — China's booming southern Hainan province has launched a landmark reform to revive lumbering state-owned industry, allowing successful private firms to take over management of ailing state dinosaurs.

"The use of this new mechanism of entrusted operation can set up a system under which people care about and take responsibility for state capital," the Hainan daily newspaper quoted deputy provincial governor Wang Xiaofeng, as saying in defence of the daring experiment.

"This is an accordance with the new road for state enterprise reform," he was quoted as saying in the Saturday edition of the newspaper, received in Beijing Sunday.

The Communist Party mouthpiece, The People's Daily, hailed the landmark pilot scheme, aimed at tackling the thorny problem of how to revive tens of thousands of loss-making state firms without diluting the controlling interest of the state.

On Friday, three of the best-managed non-state companies in China's southern-most free-wheeling province of Hainan signed contracts with the government to take over operations of five troubled state firms under pioneer regulations passed by the provincial legislature.

Hainan's Cocowind Group, selected as one of the top three companies in the booming Hainan special economic

zone, agreed to put up a cash guarantee of 7.0 million yuan (\$843,000) and to ensure annual earnings of 3.5 million yuan after taking over three firms, the Economic Information daily said.

Cocowind, which produces one of the most popular canned coconut drinks in China, contracted to take over operations of the Chengmai county coffee and liquor plant and the Shanlan Yuyue liquor factory, both loss-making and uncompetitive in China's increasingly market-driven economy, the newspaper said.

It also took over the government-owned Qiongzhou guesthouse, which earns just 200,000-300,000 yuan a year because of poor management — despite a prime site on the popular tourist island, rimmed by white-sand beaches.

Cocowind took out a full page advertisement in The Hainan daily to promote its takeover. Boasting "Cocowind people are confident", Cocowind has expanded in just three or four years to a group with 23 beverage production lines and turnover of more than 3.0 billion yuan, Economic Information said.

The Hainan Southern Feed Factory signed over operating rights to Luoniushan Joint Stock Co while the Hainan Yongcheng Enterprise Development Corp took over the Changlong Import Export Trading Co, official media said without giving details.

Natwest to cut 15,000 jobs, banking union says

LONDON (AFP) — Natwest Bank plans to shed about 15,000 jobs over the next three years in a radical restructuring of operations, the banking union BIFU has said.

Natwest, along with the other major retail banks in Britain, has already slashed its workforce over the past five years. It is the second-biggest retail bank in Britain.

Since 1991 more than 16,000 jobs have been cut at the bank's British retail branches, with 4,400 job losses last year alone.

Natwest now employs about 48,000 staff at its 2,100 retail branches. The additional 15,000 jobs are expected to go because of fierce competition within the banking industry, particularly among retail banks.

Analysis believe increasing emphasis on telephone banking, cash machines and other technology has meant that further job-shedding was inevitable.

The biggest retail bank,

Barclays, has cut 18,500 jobs during the last five years, 500 of them in 1995, when the company made record profits. Union leaders said that they expect a further 10,000 jobs to go by the end of the decade.

Lloyds-TSB, the third-biggest bank, was the only major retail bank not to cut its workforce in 1995.

Banking union BIFU said that it had assurances from Natwest that there would be no compulsory job losses this year.

The union's chief negotiator with Natwest, Alan Ainsworth, stressed that the union would carry out intensive talks with management over the summer to establish the best-possible voluntary packages.

Natwest boosted pre-tax profits last year by 10 per cent to 1.75 billion pounds (\$2.64 billion).

Recently it sold its U.S. bank Natwest Bancorp in a \$3.56 billion deal and paid \$530 million to take control of Garmore, the British fund management group.

DAILY BEAT

A review of news from the Arabic press

Jordan Steel Company to begin commercial production in August

***TRIAL PRODUCTION of two types of steel will commence in June and July of this year, Mudar Badran, chairman of the Jordan Steel Company, told the General Assembly. The factory will be officially running from the beginning of August, he announced, noting that work is currently progressing according to the schedule for equipping the plant with an annual production capacity of 300,000 tonnes. According to studies, he said, Jordan's consumption amounts to 380,000 tonnes per year and, should the factory be operated on two-shift basis, the company would be able to produce 240,000 tonnes to meet the demand in the local and neighbouring markets and to enter other export markets.

Mr. Badran pointed out that the firm's JD 15 million capital would have covered the expected cost of setting up the factory had it not been for the purchase of a thermostat and a JD 1 million investment in the Modern Aluminium Manufacturing Company. The investment, of which JD 554,000 have been paid, was authorised by the board of directors and would give Jordan Steel a 20 per cent stake in the aluminium firm. The thermostat, which cost \$950,000 and was not included in the initial cost of the factory, would give steel an additional strength and make it more competitive by providing it with an edge over other still products in the region, Mr. Badran explained.

The annual report showed that the company earned JD 309,381 in 1995 from selling imported reinforcement steel worth JD 3.6 million. Jordan Steel also earned JD 573,500 from bank interest and foreign exchange differentials but, after deducting various expenses the company's net profit stood at JD 678,900. As recommended by the board of directors, the general assembly approved allocating JD 590,200 to retained earnings and distributing the remaining amount to the obligatory reserves and other accounts. Other financial data shows that the company's total assets have jumped by 56 per cent to reach JD 17.9 million at the end of last year compared to JD 11.5 million in 1994 (Al Ra'i + Al Aswaq + Al Dustour).

Financial Markets

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (April 29 - May 3, 1996)

AMMAN — The U.S. unit depreciated moderately against the yen, while appreciating marginally against sterling and stabilising against the mark. It ended the week 0.54 per cent lower against the yen and 0.30 per cent higher against sterling.

The U.S. unit appreciated against sterling Monday, while depreciating against the mark and the yen. The dollar was under pressure on expectations that Japanese interest rates had bottomed. These expectations were triggered by an article published by a Japanese daily newspaper, later denied, that the Bank of Japan may increase Japanese interest rates as early as the current month of May.

The dollar rose noticeably against the mark and marginally against the yen Tuesday, while stabilising against sterling. The dollar rose upon the release of Chicago's purchasing managers index. The index rose to 54.0 points in April, illustrating that the manufacturing sector is expanding and hinting that the U.S. economy is witnessing solid growth.

The dollar rose against other major currencies Wednesday. Analysts indicated that sterling fell against the dollar to reach a low of \$1.4888 during trading hours, its lowest level in two years. Sterling weakened on fears that the Conservative Party of British Prime Minister John Major might receive a psychological blow the following day if it loses 500 or more local council seats to the Labour Party. However, sterling rose later that day to close at \$1.4925 to the pound. Meanwhile, the dollar rose against the mark and Swiss franc. Reports indicated that the Swiss franc's decline came on the back of comments by the Swiss finance minister, who maintained that the strong Swiss franc is hindering economic growth.

The U.S. unit depreciated against other major currencies Thursday, however, upon the release of several economic reports with positive results. The GDP report showed that the U.S. economy grew by 2.8 per cent in the first quarter of 1996, compared to 0.5 per cent in the fourth quarter of 1995. Meanwhile, factory orders surged by 1.5 per cent in March, compared to a decline of 1.5 per cent the previous month. The bond market fell on these reports, pressuring the U.S. dollar, as investors feared that the U.S. economy might be experiencing inflationary growth.

The dollar rose against the yen at the end of the week, while depreciating against the mark and sterling. Reports indicated that the release of the U.S. employment report had dealers uncertain on how to react. The U.S. employment report showed a meager rise of 2,000 in non-farm payrolls in April, compared to expectations of a rise of 129,000. March non-farm payrolls were revised up to 178,000. The unemployment rate, however, fell to 5.4 per cent, from 5.6 per cent the previous month.

The U.S. unit, thus, ended the week at 1.5253 marks, 105.09 yen and at \$1.5080 to the pound.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	April - 26 - 1996	May - 3 - 1996	Percent Change
Sterling Pound*	1.5125	1.5080	(0.30) %
Deutsche Mark	1.5285	1.5233	(0.34) %
Swiss Franc	1.2361	1.2426	(0.52) %
French Franc	5.1555	5.1543	0.02 %
Japanese Yen	105.66	105.09	0.54 %

* US\$ Per 100 Yen

Forward Currency Interest Rates*

Currency	1-Month (%)	3-Month (%)	6-Month (%)	1-Year (%)
U.S. Dollar	5.31	5.65	5.25	5.68
Sterling Pound	5.92	6.19	6.00	6.25
Deutsche Mark	3.06	3.20	3.25	3.25
Swiss Franc	1.56	1.75	1.75	1.81
French Franc	3.71	3.88	3.71	3.96
Japanese Yen	0.46	0.95	0.46	1.03

Interbank bid rates for currencies exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: May - 5 - 1996

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
Sterling Pound	1.0662	1.0715
Deutsche Mark	0.6641	0.6664
Swiss Franc	0.5695	0.5723

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET										
AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE - AMMAN - JORDAN										
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 05/05/1996										
LAST 12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / R	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
250,000	202,000	ARAB BANK	12.3	1.58	13	440	99006	236.60	234.50	3.00-
4,890	4,180	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	13.6	2.12	15	9300	22351	4.82	4.49	0.33-
3,450	3,280	MARK OF JORDAN	12.4	0.99	2	500	1728	3.60	3.46	0.14-
2,900	2,320	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	3.8	0.29	4	100	2260	2.67	2.61	0.06-
8,380	4,280	THE JORDANIAN BK.	12.0	0.97	2	800	2260	4.80	4.80	0.00
3,040	2,600	JOR. MORTGAGE BANK	20.3	0.00	10	424	1180	2.78	2.80	0.02+
1,640	920	JOR. CREDIT BANK	8.8	0.00	88	28480	27274	1.09	1.07	0.02-
4,150	3,700	JOR. J. TR. BK.	19.8	0.00	1	80	188	3.70	3.70	0.00
4,180	3,300	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	19.8	2.94	31	11968	48588	4.09	4.05	0.04-
4,480	2,800	THE JORDANIAN BK.	12.7	0.00	1	500	1530	2.80	2.66	0.14-
4,240	2,470	WEST. AL-JAL. (BETHRA)	1.8	0.08	4	3100	7488	2.82	2.48	0.34-
1,390	820	AMMAN BANK LTD.	9	0.00	23	42200	22366	0.84	0.83	0.01-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 179.72 CHNG: -0.79 136 91413 237583										
2,550	2,500	GENERAL ARAB INSUR.	88.0	0.00	2	280	756	2.80	2.70	0.10-
3,400	3,000	JAMHORIY INSUR.	7.30	0.00	1	4800	19720	3.76	2.90	0.86-
3,110	3,000	MAG. AL-JAL. INSUR.	4.1	0.00	1	890	1708	3.00	3.10	0.10+
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 128.91 CHNG: -0.04 6 7630 22181										
1,940	1,630	JOR. ELECTRICITY PWR.	11.4	7.33	33	15987	26272	1.70	1.64	0.06-
3,080	2,610	SHIPPING LINES	6.5	7.38	2	450	1220	2.75	3.71	0.96+
2,610	1,790	MID. EAST TOURS	92.6	0.00	4	3300	7095	3.15	2.15	1.00-
1,520	1,000	JOR. TRAVEL CO.	7	4.47	3	460	480	1.04	1.02	0.02+
1,610	1,000	SARNA EDUCATION	9	0.00	13	7300	7372	1.01	1.01	0.00
2,600	1,870	UNIFIED CO.	10.8	4.88	1	250	513	2.10	2.05	0.05-
1,200	820	AMMAN LAND DEV.	8	0.00	61	109000	117161	1.04	1.11	0.07+
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 120.94 CHNG: -0.66 117 138727 160119										
1,930	1,440	ATTACHMENT	72.0	0.00	4	4410	5513	1.28	1.26	0.02+
4,120	3,380	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	20.6	2.78	22	2958	14132	3.57	3.60	0.03+
3,750	2,700	JOR. PROSPERITY MINES	33.6	0.00	2	650	2024	3.21	3.12	0.09+
6,020	4,750	ARAB POTASH CO.	18.3	2.74	2	350	1822	6.28	5.35	0.93-
11,150	8,900	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	13.8	5.94	11	1016	10297	10.10	10.10	0.00
2,660	2,110	JOR. PAPER MANUF.	12.1	8.48	1	280	648	2.31	2.19	0.12-
6,640	5,400	JOR. ALUMINA DEV. INV.	15.1	3.64	2	100	548	5.50	5.50	0.00
6,700	5,050	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.5	7.48	10	2088	10928	6.39	5.37	1.02-
1,590	1,260	ARAB PAPER COMB. IND.	10.7	7.30	12	4180	8478	1.17	1.21	0.04-
3,110	1,350	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	7.41	1	300	270	1.35	1.25	0.10-
1,450	880	NATIONAL IRON	13.2	6.74	38	26880	23642	0.90	0.89	0.01-
2,950	1,080	INTERNED. PETROL. CHEM.	9	0.00	19	9950	7852	1.35	1.32	0.03-
1,340	830	JOR. ROCKWELL IND.	2	0.00	30	9300	9631	1.00	1.08	0.08+
1,840	950	JOR. SULPHUR CHEM.	7	0.00	6	1250	1240	1.00	1.00	0.00
3,580	1,080	ARAB PHARM. IND.	6.7	7.94	1	200	282	1.27	1.26	0.01-
1,820	1,400	KANISER INVEST.	12.7	0.00	3	500	770	1.47	1.54	0.07+
3,680	2,440	UNIV. MOD. IND.	7.4	8.03	10	8280	20400	2.49	2.49	0.00
2,480	1,380	JOR. IND. RESEARCH	23.0	0.00	77	40850	71306	1.78	1.75	0.03-
2,100	1,000	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	31.5	0.00	14	6450	7482	1.19	1.16	0.03-
2,610	1,880	EL - RAY READY WEAR	8	0.00	12	6747	15527	2.31	2.26	0.05-
1,670	1,180	UNIV. TOBACCO	9	0.00	22	6400	8498	1.36	1.34	0.01-
2,660	1,180	UNIV. C. & VEG.	34.0	0.00	8	4000	5523	1.44	1.38	0.06-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 117.53 CHNG: 0.00 299 138301 224214										
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 148.86 CHNG: -0.44 588 169081 644076										
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 05/05/1996										
1,000	1,000	ARAB CONTRACTORS	U	0.00	1	1000	1000	1.00	1.00	-
940	700	JOR. TRADE FAC.	20.0	0.00	2	1000	780	0.78	0.75	-
1,000	760	UNION INV. 80%	88.8	0.00	11	9700	3218	0.83	0.83	-
1,000	630	ARAB INV. INVEST.	U	0.00	21	16400	13569	0.84	0.83	0.01-
1,740	630	JOR. TRAVEL INVEST. JEMCO	U	0.00	1	200	102	0.49	0.51	0.02+
1,240	630	ARAB FOOD & MED.	U	0.00	4	950	578	0.69	0.68	0.01-
2,130	1,380	MATL. CHEMICALS	U	0.00	35	26150	43770	1.62	1.67	0.04+
920	520	ARAB INTEL. INV. IND.	U	0.00	4	1004	617	0.61	0.61	0.00
1,940	950	JOR. TRAVEL INVEST. JEMCO	U	0.00	2	360	224	0.65	0.64	0.01-
1,100	700	MATL. CHEM. IND. JEMCO	U	0.00	18	13200	12666	0.93	0.92	0.01-
1,380	800	JORDAN STEEL	U	0.00	8	3890	2696	0.97	0.96	0.01-
1,070	600	ARAB ELECT. IND.	U	0.00	3	800	518	0.68	0.68	0.00
1,030	870	MIDWEST PHARM. 75%	U	0.00	5	1800	800	0.72	0.69	0.03-
1,880	1,100	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	U	0.00	8	4300	4331	1.27	1.25	0.02-
1,030	680	RAILWAY 50%	U	0.00	7	4960	990	0.71	0.70	0.01-
970	570	IND. INV.	31.4	0.00	1	260	338	0.68	0.63	0.05-
1,020	660	FRANK S.M. P. COM.	U	0.00	17	6850	5901	0.96	0.96	0.00
970	730	MATL. CHEMICALS	U	0.00	7	3347	3320	0.70	0.69	0.01-
1,300	700	MID. EAST COMPLEX	20.8	0.00	1	400	308	0.77	0.77	0.00
8,500	3,380	ARAB CEMENT	13.8	8.88	8	42950	3230	0.77	0.76	0.01-
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 148.86 CHNG: -0.44 588 169081 644076										
↓ New 12 months low										
↑ Week dividend during the past 12 months										
↑ Dividend during the past 12 months										
P: P/E ratio is 100 or more										
N: Negative P/E										
E: Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year										

Grindstone wins Kentucky Derby by a nose

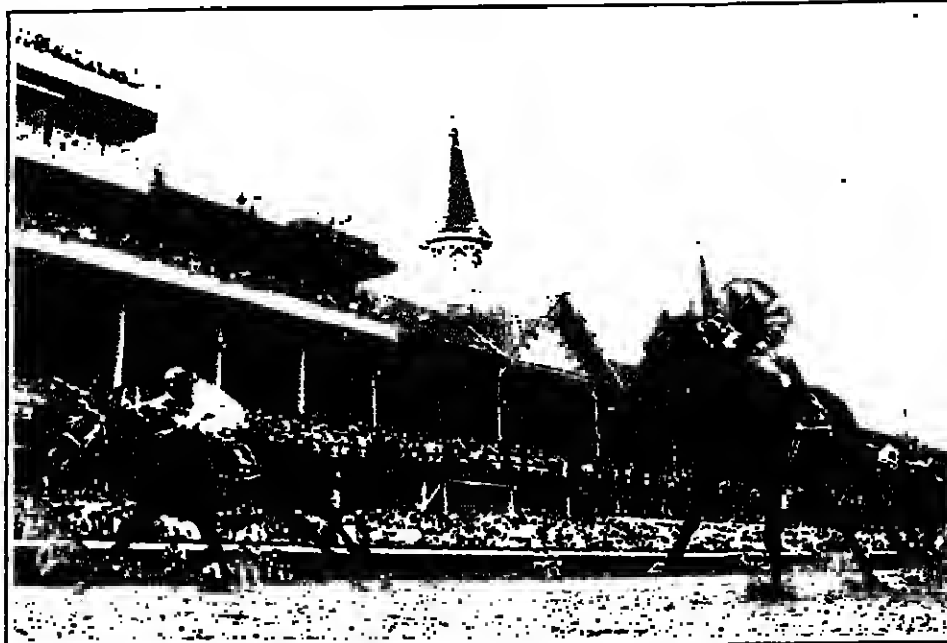
LOUISVILLE, Kentucky (AP) — Grindstone, ridden by Jerry Bailey, won the Kentucky Derby by a nose here on Saturday, edging Cavonnier in the closest finish since 1959.

Prince of Thieves, ridden by Pat Day and like Grindstone trained by D. Wayne Lukas, was third.

Lukas-trained horses have now won the last six Triple Crown races — the coveted series that starts every year with the Kentucky Derby and includes the Preakness and Belmont Stakes.

Chris McCarron rode Cavonnier, who took the lead from fading favorite Unbridled's Song in the final stretch. But Grindstone, patiently piloted through the traffic by Bailey, broke free on the outside down the stretch to win the mile and a quarter race in two minutes and one second.

"It looked like 114 in front of me," Bailey said of his mid-race, mid-field view. "The whole idea was to try to hit the holes without getting stopped. There were some tight squeezes, but he was game to go through every



Grindstone (left), ridden by Jerry Bailey, edges out Cavonnier, ridden by Chris McCarron, to win the 122nd running of the Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs, May 4 (Reuters photo)

one of them."

At the top of the stretch, Bailey said he moved his whip to his left hand and Grindstone exploded.

It took officials several minutes to review the finish line photo and call the winner. "I thought I was going to win it when I passed the 16th

pole," McCarron said. "At the wire I wasn't sure. He (Grindstone) was so far out in the middle of the race-track I couldn't really tell."

Grindstone gave veteran Kentucky breeder and owner William T. Young his first Derby victory.

Unbridled's Song, the 7-2 favorite, had to contend with a cracked left front hoof and the unfavourable outside post position.

"It was just too much to overcome," said jockey Mike Smith, who moved Unbridled's Song smoothly from the far outside post and into the lead by the three-quarter mile mark, when he overtook early pace-setters Honor and Glory and Matty G.

Smith said the special bar shoes worn by the colt because of his hoof injury made it difficult for him to keep his footing at top speed.

"They say it's like wearing combat boots to run a foot race," Smith said. "He just couldn't handle it."

Unbridled's Song finished fifth, behind Halo Sunshine. Lukas, who had five horses entered in the race, became only the fourth trainer to win back-to-back Kentucky Derbies. H.J. Thompson did it in 1932-33, Jimmy Jones did it in 1957-58 and Lucien Laurin did it in 1972-73.

Seattle slams defending champion Rockets in series opener

SEATTLE (R) — The Seattle Supersonics handed the defending NBA Champion Houston Rockets their worst playoff defeat ever, storming to a 108-75 victory on Saturday in game one of their Western Conference semifinal series.

Gary Payton scored 28 points and Sam Perkins keyed a pivotal run that bridged the third and fourth quarters as Seattle took a 1-0 lead in the best-of-seven series.

The Sonics held Houston centre Hakeem Olajuwon to a career playoff low of six points on 3-of-9 shooting, and used a 23-4 streak to break open a five-point game in the third quarter.

Rubert Horry had 18 points for the Rockets, who managed just 31 points in the second half. Houston, winners of the last two NBA titles, shot just 32.5 per cent (13-of-40) after the intermission.

"In the third quarter, we got a little impatient and a little sloppy," Rockets coach Rudy Tomjanovich said. "Let's just say the ball didn't go in the basket."

"The fast-breaking game

caved in. It was a just like a dam breaking and we couldn't stop the water coming over us. We're going to have to regroup and understand what they're doing."

Shawn Kemp had 17 points and 12 rebounds as Seattle outbounded Houston 52-36 on the way to their largest

The Sonics, tied with Houston 44-44 at the half, began their decisive burst leading 60-55 with 3:26 to go in the third quarter. Nate McMillan hit a three-pointer and Perkins added a basket. Kemp followed with a three-point play to make it 68-55. Mario Elie hit a basket to

NBA PLAYOFFS

post-season margin of victory ever. Payton added seven assists for the Sonics, who made 25-of-45 shots in the second half.

Game two is Monday in Seattle.

"It's a great win for us, but we can't celebrate," Sonics coach George Karl said. "All we've done, basically, is begun the chess match."

"With a seven-game series, the first two games are the most difficult to get. I think you're going to see on Monday night a championship basketball team come after us with tremendous intensity, some better preparation, and some adjustments."

snap the run but Perkins followed with another three-pointer for a 71-57 lead with 40 seconds left in the quarter. Clyde Drexler hit a 15-footer but Payton ended the period with a basket for a 73-59 lead.

Perkins and McMillan opened the final quarter with three pointers and Delf Schrempf added consecutive baskets for an 83-59 advantage with 8:38 remaining.

Asked about the strategy employed against Olajuwon, Kemp said the Sonics used "a lot of quick double teams, being active defensively with our hands. It was a total team effort. We play a lot better when we play faster."

Rockies smash Marlins

DENVER (R) — Anders Galarra smashed two three-run homers and drove in seven runs as the Colorado Rockies tied team records for homers, hits and runs in a 17-5 Saturday romp over the slumping Florida Marlins.

The Rockies collected 21 hits and slugged five home runs.

Larry Walker, Ellis Burks and Eric Young hammered during a seven-run first inning. Galarra's blasts came in the second and sixth innings and he added an RBI single in the third.

"I'd have to say this is the low point of the season," Marlins first baseman Greg Colbrunn said. "Everything they hit was a rocket."

Walker had three hits, three runs scored and three RBIs. Dante Bichette had a pair of hits and scored four runs. Young drove in three runs. Vinny Castilla had three hits and drove in two runs and Jason Bates had a pair of RBI singles.

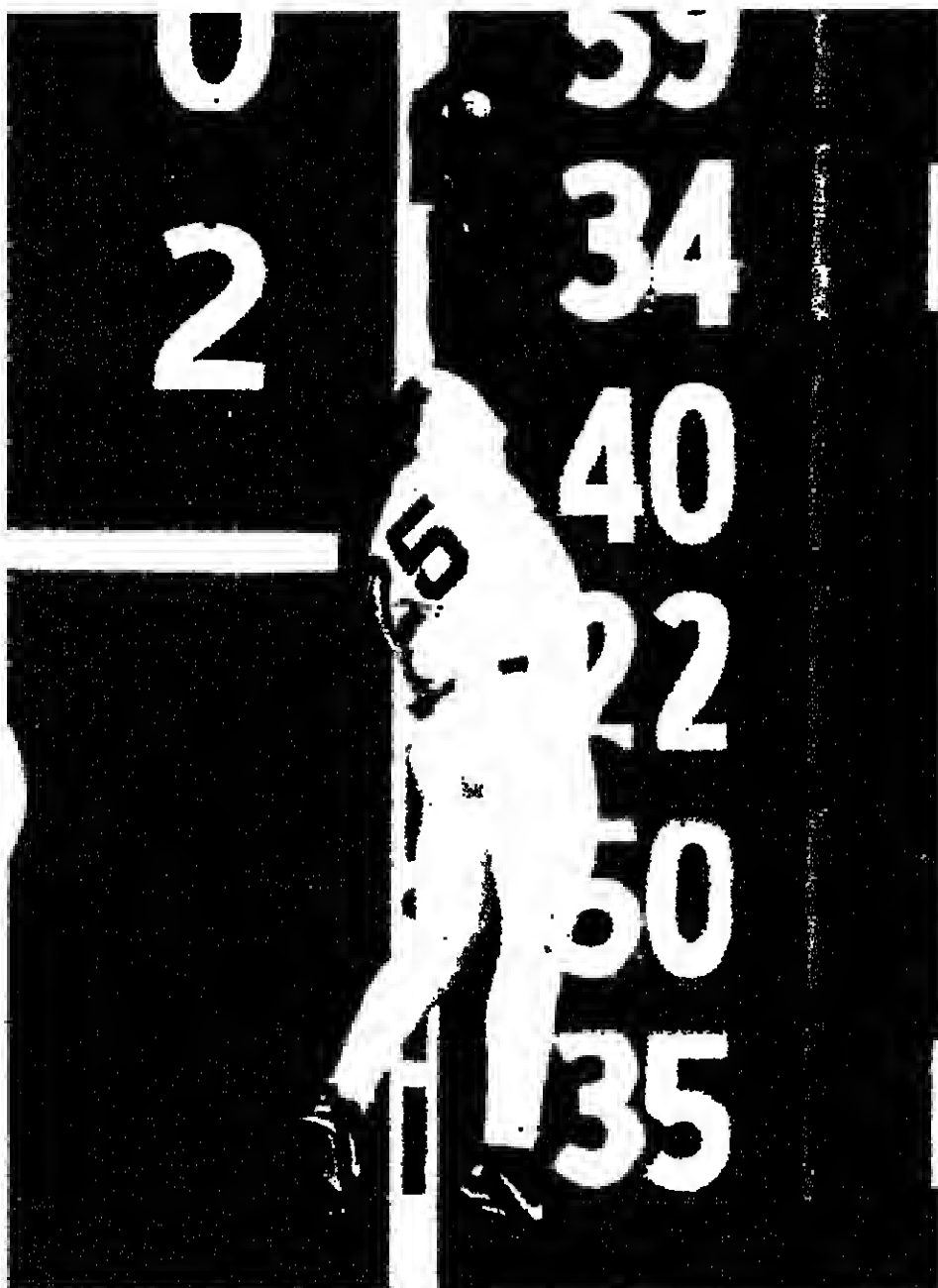
Jeff Conine, Alex Arias and Craig Grebeck homered for the Marlins, who have lost four in a row, six of seven and nine of 12. They are 11-20, the worst record in the National League.

Rockies starter Marvin Freeman (3-2) allowed four runs and five hits in seven innings. "I made pitches when I had to and got double plays," Freeman said. "In this ballpark, even with a 13-run lead you still have to make your pitches."

In Houston, Henry Rodriguez's two-run homer in the top of the ninth rallied the Montreal Expos to a 2-1 victory over the Houston Astros.

Mike Lansing led off the ninth with a walk off Xavier Hernandez (0-1). Three pitches later, Rodriguez hit his 11th homer over the fence in left-centre to put Montreal ahead.

"Hernandez threw me something on the outside cor-



Troy O'Leary of the Boston Red Sox leaps to reach this ball hit by John Olerud of the Toronto Blue Jays in third inning action at Toronto's Fenway Park, May 4 (Reuters photo)

ner. Rodriguez said of the home-run pitch. "I was just looking to drive it, not necessarily to hit it out of the ball park."

Former Astro Dave Veres (3-0) recorded the final two outs of the eighth inning for the victory.

In San Francisco, Erick Davis hit a Grand Slam in the seventh inning and Eric Anthony had two solo homers to lead the Cincinnati

Reds to a 9-7 comeback victory over the Giants.

Trailing 5-3 entering the seventh, the Giants loaded the bases against Mark Leiter (2-4). Mark Dewey came on and surrendered Davis' fifth home run and sixth career grand slam. Two outs later, Anthony reached him for his fourth homer and second of the game to make it 8-5.

Reds reliever Marcus Moore (2-2) picked up the

win.

In Pittsburgh, Jeff King went 4-for-4 with three doubles and four RBIs and Paul Wanger pitched a five-hitter to lead the Pirates to a 7-2 victory over the Los Angeles Dodgers.

King capped a three-run fifth inning with a two-run double to make it 4-1. "Any time you have guys on base you want to be able to hit the ball hard," King said.

Bayern keep title hopes alive

BERLIN (AP) — Bulgarian World Cup player Emil Kostadinov was the unlikely hero Saturday as Bayern Munich swept aside FC Cologne 3-2 to keep their Bundesliga title hopes alive.

Kostadinov, who rarely plays at Munich, fired two goals to help the Franz Beckenbauer-coached team stay points even with Borussia Dortmund in the end of the Bundesliga title race.

"We know what Kostadinov can do — unfortunately he doesn't show it too often," said Beckenbauer, who was rewarded for his surprise move of inserting the Bulgarian to replace French striker Jean-Pierre Papin in the lineup.

Both Munich, a 13-time titlist, and defending champion Dortmund have three matches to play in a season dominated by their fierce battle for the Bundesliga crown.

Dortmund, with a huge plus of 13 in goal differential over their rival, broke out of a slump Friday with the return of playmaker Andy Moeller from injury. They trounced relegation-bound KFC Uerdingen 5-0.

Fourth-place Hans Rostock took a big step toward sealing a berth in next year's UEFA Cup competition by edging Werder Bremen 2-1. They were joined in the hunt by two other clubs.

Karlsruhe SC, behind two goals by South African striker Sean Dundee, beat Borussia Moenchengladbach 2-1, while Schalke's unheralded side routed Eintracht Frankfurt 3-0. The two teams share fifth place.

The loss may have doomed Frankfurt, a founding club of the Bundesliga, to relegation for the first time in their history. But several other clubs are also fighting a free fall from powerhouse to second division.

Bayer Leverkusen, another tradition club, moved out of relegation range as they beat 1860 Munich 2-1 but FC Kaiserslautern was held to a scoreless draw by SC Freiburg in a match Friday.

Kaiserslautern, in 16th place, appears certain to be demoted after having played in the UEFA Cup this season.

Fortuna Dueseldorf killed VFB Stuttgart's last chance of a UEFA Cup berth with its 3-2 win over the struggling club.

Munich dominated against Cologne, but saw most of their scoring chances shatter on the fists of Bodo Illgner, Germany's World Cup goalie.

Kostadinov, off a pass by Mehmet Schull, staked Munich to a 1-0 halftime lead with his fifth-minute goal. But Illgner robbed his teammates of several other high-percentage shots.

"It should have been 4-0 at halftime — we're going to have to do a better job of converting our chances," said Beckenbauer.

After Munich's Lothar Matthaus evened the score with an own goal early in the second half, Jurgen Klinsmann responded with his 14th season goal and Kostadinov sealed the win in the 62nd minute.



Auxerre's soccer team players pose with the French Cup trophy after defeating Nimes 2-1 in French Cup final May 4 (Reuters Photo)

Auxerre win French Cup

PARIS (AFP) — French first division pacesetters Auxerre came back to beat "Cinderella" opponents Nimes 2-1 in the French Cup final Saturday night — but their manager Guy Roux made it clear that celebrations would have to wait for another fortnight.

"I knew it would be tough tonight and although this victory means that we shall be playing in at least the European Cup Winners Cup competition next season, we are still in with a chance of winning the league title."

"We play at Guingamp next Saturday and then face Nantes in the last league match of the season and our players are intelligent professionals. They have agreed to postpone any celebration until May 18."

Auxerre, currently three points ahead of Metz and four points clear of Paris St. Germain in the first division title

race, were rocked back on their heels by the relegation-threatened third division side when Omar Bembey slotted past Lionel Charbonnier after 25 minutes.

The move was started on the left by the quicksilver Nicolas Marx who cleverly committed the Auxerre defenders on the edge of the box while leaving the ball for Abdel Ramdane. Ramdane raced down to the line and cut the ball back and Belbey, charging in like an express train, slotted home a first-time effort.

Auxerre had to wait until six minutes into the second-half to get back on level terms — Laurent Blanc, the French international sweeper, heading home from a corner with Nimes' goalkeeper Philippe Sence off his line.

It was probably the only

mistake Sence made all night — and the he was singled out for special praise by Nimes' manager Pierre Barlaguet after the match.

But as the game wore on Auxerre's superior fitness began to tell and although Sence made a series of excellent saves, he was left no chance when Lillian Laglandes headed home his side's winner from a Corentin Martins free-kick in the 89th minute.

Sence completed his remarkable evening by saving a Laurent Blanc penalty in the dying seconds.

Auxerre's only previous cup win came in 1994 when they beat Montpellier 3-0 while Nimes have now lost in the final three times.

If Auxerre clinch the French title, Nimes will play in next season's European Cup Winners' Cup.

Texas Rangers overcome Detroit Tigers

DETROIT (R) — It was a tough act to follow, but Roger Pavlik was up to the task as he matched fellow-Texas hurler Ken Hill's nine-hit gem with a one-hitter of his own Saturday in the Rangers' 3-1 victory over the Detroit Tigers.

Hill pitched a one-hitter against the toothless Tigers on Friday and Roger Pavlik performed a sequel to improve his record to 4-0. Pavlik retired the first 14 batters to run the Texas string to 40 consecutive outs recorded against Detroit.

The only hit Pavlik allowed was a fifth-inning homer to Mark Lewis.

"It's real frustrating. It's something I really didn't expect to see from this team," said Lewis about the Tigers' lack of hitting. "But when pitchers at this level are on their game like these two guys, they can make it tough."

Texas became the first American League club to toss consecutive one-hitters against the same team since the Washington Senators in 1917.

Pavlik struck out seven,

got 10 flyouts and five popouts.

"I just kind of slowed it down a little," said Pavlik, who entered the game with a bloated 7.14 era. "I've struggled with location, but today the location was there."

Shutout Kevin Elster continued his unlikely season-long power surge with his sixth homer in the fourth inning. Prior to this season, he had hit just seven since 1991.

In Baltimore, Brady Anderson hit his major league-leading 15th homer of the season and Roberto Alomar added a grand slam as the Baltimore Orioles pounded the Milwaukee Brewers 10-5.

Anderson continued his awesome power surge by leading off with a homer for the sixth time this season, passing the 1971 club record of five set by Don Buford. Anderson has had 113 at-bats this year. He hit 16 homers in 554 at-bats in 1995.

"I'm just trying to have good at-bats, not hit home runs," said Anderson. "I'm not trying to do too much,

just trying to keep things simple, get good pitches and hit the ball hard."

Jeffrey Hammonds added a three-run homer against knuckleballer Steve Sparks (1-4). Mike Mussina (4-2) got the victory.

In Boston, Bill Haselman homered and drove in four runs and Wil Cordero highlighted a four-run first inning with a two-run single to lead the Boston Red Sox to their second win of the day, an 8-4 victory over the Toronto Blue Jays.

Earlier, the Red Sox hung on to beat Toronto 8-7 in the completion of their suspended game from Friday night. Rain interrupted play Friday for a total of three hours 47 minutes. The game was suspended with the Red Sox holding a 6-1 lead just after the 1 a.m. curfew.

At California, Jason Grimsley pitched 6 1/3 hitless innings and J.T. Snow and Garret Anderson hit back-to-back homers in the sixth as the Angels extended their winning streak to five games with a 5-2 win over the Minnesota Twins.

Grimsley (2-1), who made

his third start of the season, held the twins without a hit until Greg Myers doubled down the left-field line with one out in the seventh inning. Myers eventually scored, and also added a solo homer in the ninth.

"Jason Grimsley pitches no-hitter," that's kind of like "Jason Grimsley walks on the moon" — it's not going to happen," quipped Grimsley.

In Kansas City, Steve Wojciechowski tossed 7 1/3 strong innings and Jason Giambi added a two-run homer as the Oakland Athletics beat the Kansas City Royals 5-2 to snap a four-game losing streak.

Wojciechowski (3-0) won his third consecutive start, allowing two runs and nine hits. Buddy Groom retired the final five batters for his first save.

In New York, Frank Thomas and Dave Martinez had RBI singles in a four-run eighth inning and Harold Baines blasted a grand slam in the ninth to lift the Chicago White Sox to an 11-5 victory over the New York Yankees.



Spain's Carlos Moya raises his arms in jubilation after his semi-final match against Austria's Thomas Muster at the Munich Bavarian Open ATP tournament in Munich May 4. Moya won the match by 6-3, 6-3 (Reuters photo)

Moya ends Muster's 38-match streak

MUNICH (AP) — Carlos Moya snapped Thomas Muster's 38-match clay streak Saturday to reach the finals of the BMW Open in a surprisingly one-sided match.

Moya, 19, needed just 69 minutes to beat Muster, 6-3, 6-3, and break a winning streak on clay dating back to early August.

He also topped the world's second-ranked player's string at seven clay court titles in a row. Muster was last beaten on the surface by Spain's Alberto Costa at

Kitzbuehel.

The Spaniard, in just his second year as a pro, did it by beating the error-prone Austrian at his own game, overpowering the world's best clay court player at the baseline.

"This may be the best match I've ever played, for sure," said Moya, world No. 40.

Moya will face another unseeded player, Slava Dosedel of the Czech Republic, in the final. Dosedel ousted local

hero Boris Becker of Germany, 7-6 (7-2), 2-6, 7-6 (8-6) in a three-hour match.

Dosedel fought off a match-point against Becker, who lives just 10 minutes from the courts, when he trailed 5-4 in the third set.

He staved off the loss by ripping a forehand that barely caught the line, but denied Becker one of his rare chances to win the first clay court title of his long career.

Muster said he wasn't upset about the loss to Moya.

Navratilova avenges Legends Tour loss

WESLEY CHAPEL, Florida (AP) — Martina Navratilova, beaten by her former doubles partner Pam Shriver in the opening Virginia Slims Legends Tour event, got some playful revenge in the second event Saturday, edging Shriver 6-4 in the one-set match.

"She served me off the court in Chicago," Navratilova said of the season-opening match last month. "But today, she missed a few more serves than before and I was able to return better."

During their playing days on the tour, Navratilova owned Shriver, winning 40 of their 43 meetings.

"I knew it would be competitive, but I didn't know it would be extremely competitive," Shriver said.

With each team earning one point for each game won, Team II, headed by Billie Jean King, led after the first day with 24 points in the two-day exhibition tournament. Navratilova's Team I won just two of the five matches Saturday and had 21 points.

In doubles play, Navratilova and Hana Mandlikova took a 4-1 lead in the one-set match against Zina Garrison Jackson and Shriver. But the Garrison Jackson-Shriver duo, the youngest pair on the Legends Tour, rallied to take the next five sets for a 6-4 win.

Earlier Saturday, Garrison Jackson paired with King and easily beat Mandlikova and Virginia Wade 6-1, while Shriver, and Rosie Casals got past Navratilova and Evonne Goolagong 6-4.

Atletico stay clear in Spain

MADRID (R) — Spanish league leaders Atletico Madrid took a big step towards their first league title in 19 years when they notched their 13th away win of the season by beating Compostela 3-1 Saturday.

With just three games left Atletico stayed four points ahead of Valencia, who moved up to second place after beating Sporting Gijon 4-0 at home.

Barcelona could close to three points if they win their home game with Sevilla on Sunday.

Atletico got off to a fine start when international playmaker, Jose Luis Caminero slipped the Compostela off-side trap and nonchalantly lobbed the ball over goalkeeper Francisco Flagan with just eight minutes on the clock.

Compostela put Atletico under pressure in the rest of the first half but were reduced to 10 men when Francisco Villena was sent off for

a heavy challenge on Leonardo Biagini.

Just after the break Argentine midfielder Diego Simeone, who put in a superb all-round performance, combined well with Robert Fresnedoso and side-stepped Falagán to blast home the second.

Atletico keeper Jose Molina made several fine saves from Danish forward Bent Christensen as Compostela pushed forward.

At the other end Caminero capitalised on sloppy defending to ensure Atletico's victory 10 minutes from time.

With two minutes left Compostela won an indirect free-kick just four metres from the Atletico goal after Molina illegally handled a back-pass in a mix-up with his defenders, and Christensen crashed home a consolation goal.

Valencia once again had victory thanks to the flamboyant Brazilian striker, scored the only goal of a poor game with Sporting Gijon.

TO LET

Two bedroom furnished apartment with telephone and separate central heating. Location: Jabal Amman, between 4th and 5th Circles. For more information please call Tel. No. 825924

ANNOUNCEMENT

After the completion of the rehabilitation work on the Madaba Archaeological Museum, The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities/Department of Antiquities would like to announce that the museum is ready to receive tourists and visitors as of May 7th, 1996. All are most welcome.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH

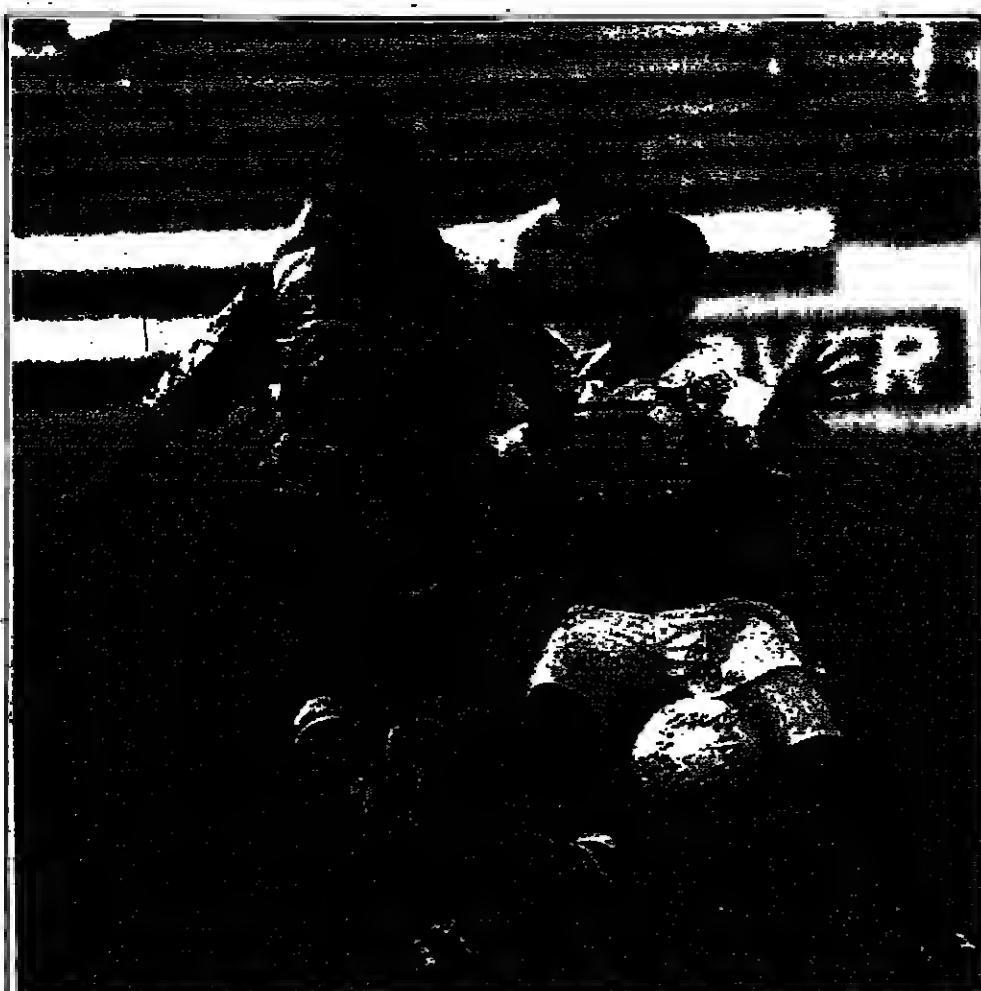
STOLEN IN A HOLDUP

Both vulnerable. North deals NORTH ♠ A Q 9 8 4 ♥ 6 5 3 ♦ A 8 7 5 4 ♣ A 8 7 5 4 EAST ♠ 10 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♥ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♦ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 ♣ 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

The bidding: NORTH EAST SOUTH WEST 1♠ Pass 2♠ Pass 3♠ Pass 4♠ Pass

Opening lead: Ten of ♠. Carlos Caballero first won the Argentine inter-club championship in 1944. In 1994, 50 years later he won it again — for the 13th time! On this hand from the event, he was able to appreciate fine defense by his partner, Eduardo Scannavino. North-South conducted an excellent auction to arrive at four hearts. In the face of North's announced length in the black

suits, South's heart rebid promised at least six cards in the suit, so North was assured of an adequate fit. With West holding the king of spades, it seemed that even the 4-1 trump split could not deny South 10 tricks. Since the spade finesse was going to succeed, declarer could afford to lose two trumps and a club. But a strange thing happened after Scannavino, West, led the ten of diamonds. Declarer won in dummy and led the ace of trumps, covered by the ten and won by the jack when West contributed the three. Impressed by the 'success' of the finesse and paying no heed to East's ten, declarer crossed to the ace of clubs to repeat the finesse. This time West won the queen and exited with a diamond. In with the king of diamonds, declarer led the king of trumps to force out the ace. But now West underled the king of clubs and East, upon gaining the lead with the jack, wasted no time in returning a diamond for West to ruff. Down one. Since 10 tricks made at the same contract in the other room, that resulted in a substantial gain for Caballero's team.



Tunisian player Hassen Gabel (left) passes Saudi defence Khalid Ettimaoui (right) in the final game of the Super Arab Cup between the Tunisian team Esperance Sportif and the Saudi Arabian team Al Hilal. Esperance of Tunisia won the game 2-0 (Reuters photo)

Morocco's Alami upsets Chang to reach final

ATLANTA (AFP) — Sixth-seeded Moroccan Karim Alami upset top-seed and defending champion Michael Chang 6-4, 6-4 here Saturday to reach the final of the ATP's Atlanta claycourt tournament.

Alami, 22, needed one and a half hours to record his best victory since a win over Pete Sampras in 1994.

He will meet either second-seeded American Richey Reneberg or Sweden's Niklas Pietrangeli.

Chang, who struggled all week, was clearly in trouble on his serve and he later admitted that a strained right shoulder had hampered him.

But he took nothing away from Alami.

"I can't go out with excuses," he said. "I have been having a bit of a shoulder strain this week but I don't want to take anything away from Alami. He played good tennis and served well."

Alami broke Chang in the opening game of the match, then held for 2-0. Chang fought back with a break in the fourth to level the set at 2-2. They traded breaks again in the seventh and eighth games before Alami earned the decisive break of the set to go up 5-4 then served out for the set.

In the second, Alami continued to attack at the net, and he had more success with his serve as well.

He broke Chang in the first game, and in the sixth forced out three break points, one with a gutsy drop shot, to keep the advantage. "I felt like I had my opportunities to break

in the second set," Chang said. "He was looking pretty tired. I was hoping to get that break back. But he was able to serve well on the big occasions."

Serving for the match at 5-4, Alami held his serve to love. He closed out the match with two service winners — a 120mph blast to set up match point and a 116mph first serve on his first match point.

"I was concentrated to play my game and have fun on court," Alami said. "I knew if I played well I would have lots of chances to win the match."

Alami, ranked 78th in the world, said his 1994 win over Sampras was still the best victory of his career.

"Number one is still number one," he said.

"Also, heck then, I was ranked in the 200s. Now I'm in the top 100, and I know I can go out on court and beat anybody. I see things differently now."

Alami reached his second career final. At Casablanca in 1994 he reached the final but lost to Italian Renzo Furlan.

Chang said he would take the coming week off, then play in the Italian Open in Rome the week of May 13 — his only warm-up for the French Open.

"I'm not where I would like to be," Chang said. "I have quite a few things to work on right now. But at this point of the year, I'm always saying that. It takes time to adjust to the play as far as fitness and movement. Hopefully next week will be beneficial to me."

Hill wins 5th championship Grand Prix

IMOLA, Italy (AP) — Damon Hill beat defending world champion Michael Schumacher by 16.4 seconds in Sunday's Grand Prix of San Marino to give the Williams Renault team the fifth victory in as many world championship races this season.

Hill's victory over his German rival, at the home track of the Ferrari team, left the record crowd of partisan fans bitterly disappointed.

Ferrari supporters had been hoping for the first Ferrari season triumph after Schumacher won the pole

position in Saturday's qualifying.

The 17th career victory of the 35-year-old British driver — an amazing fourth out of five Grand Prix this year — gave Hill 43 points in the drivers' standings, 21 points ahead of his Canadian teammate Jacques Villeneuve who retired with only four laps left, while in sixth place.

Austrian Gerhard Berger drove his Benetton Renault to third place, ahead of the second Ferrari of Britain's Eddie Irvine.

Berger had a gap of 46.8 seconds from the winner.

Brazilian Rubens Barrichello placed fifth, with Frenchman Jean Alesi sixth in a Benetton Renault.

Hill, who started cautiously from the first row and fell to third in the initial laps, took advantage of the reliability of his Williams Renault and of a better pit strategy to score a consecutive triumph in the San Marino GP, following last year's victory.

Villeneuve, who ended Hill's winning streak by taking the European Grand Prix at Nurburgring last Sunday, lagged behind throughout the race, until retirement, as he was delayed by a flat tire in the second lap and had an extra pit stop.

Armstrong retains Tour Dupont lead

GREENSBORO, North Carolina (R) — Dutchman Leon Van Bon rode to an easy stage win on Saturday, while American Lance Armstrong retained his leader's jersey for the third day in windy and warm conditions in the Tour Dupont.

Van Bon, 24, a third-year pro, claimed his stage win after escaping from a large sprinting group to win the 110.5-mile (177.9-km) Raleigh to Greensboro road race by 30 metres in four hours 37 minutes and 34 seconds.

Radisa Cubric, a native Yugoslavian who lives in the United States, was second

and Malcolm Elliott of Britain placed third, both two seconds behind the winner. Armstrong, 24, who assumed the race lead after winning the second stage Thursday night, finished 41st in the main pack, also two seconds behind.

He kept his 35-second margin over reigning Tour of Italy champion Tony Rominger of Switzerland. Rominger's teammate, Daniele Nardello of Italy, remained third, trailing by 44 seconds.

"I'm feeling better and better each day," said Rominger. "Tomorrow will be a key stage, and I've got good, strong helpers for the mountains."

FURNISHED FLAT WANTED

3 bedrooms is a must with phone. Location: Between 1st and 7th Circles. For information, please call 638194 ext. 140 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Monday 6/5, Tuesday 7/5 and Wednesday 8/5.

A Palace in Amman for Sale

Located in a unique and overlooking location, surrounded by a big garden planted with well-coordinated trees with an outdoor sheltered sitting area, and a heated swimming pool with utilities. The Palace consists of a major entrance lounge, and an official guest quarter, and a family housing quarter. The official guest quarter includes a spacious salon, a dining area and an office surrounding a central rooftop and decorated court with a fountain in the centre. The quarter also includes overlooking sheltered terraces. The family housing quarter includes a central sheltered court as in the official guest quarter, surrounded by a spacious salon and dining area. It includes five bedrooms each with a bathroom, and a dressing chamber. The main sleeping quarter consists of one spacious bedroom, two dressing rooms, two master bedrooms, one sitting room and an office. The internal kitchen is located between the two dining halls. The palace also includes a maid quarter, outdoor kitchen, garage for several cars, sauna, steam bath, sport games room, large store, deluxe finishing, high quality Italian marble for floor and plaster decorated ceiling supported by oak wood. The palace is centrally airconditioned and heated using the invisible German type of central heating and airconditioning. Please call Telephone 604177- Amman.



Jordan Phosphate Mines Co. Ltd.

announces the extension to tender No.: 12F/96

JPMC announces the extension of the closing date for bid No. 12F/96,

(FOR THE SUPPLY OF (12,000) METRIC TONS OF WET ALUMINUM HYDROXIDE)

The tender documents are available at JPMC offices in Amman, Supply Department, until 2:00 p.m. local time Saturday 11th May 1996. Application for documents should be accompanied by a non-refundable fee of JD 125 for each set of tender documents.

The closing date for submitting bids is 12:00 hours local time Thursday 18th May, 1996.

Sameh Madani Managing Director

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Graf returns to Italy after nine year absence

ROME (R) — World number one Steffi Graf, conspicuously missing for the past nine years, returns to Rome on Monday as the top seed in a women's Italian Open tennis tournament depleted by the absence of others.

The 26-year-old German, who won the title in her last appearance on the clay courts of the Foro Italico in 1987, will have Spaniards Martinez and Arantxa Sanchez Vicario as her main rivals for the winner's \$150,000.

Graf, like several other top players, has made it clear previously that she dislikes

the rowdy atmosphere of the tournament and the openly partisan crowd.

In 1987, she was on the receiving end of some unpleasant media comments comparing her appearance unfavourably to Argentine Gabriela Sabatini who has long been a local favourite because of her Italian ancestry.

This year Sabatini, winner four times, is among the illustrious absentees. She withdrew last week complain-

ing of an abdominal muscle strain.

Germany's Anke Huber, who would have been the fifth seed, pulled out on Saturday because of injury, as earlier had American Jennifer Capriati, another local idol because of her Italian parentage.

American Monica Seles and Japan's Kimiko Date, who beat Graf in the Federation Cup last month, are also absent from a tournament, often used as a warm-up for the French Open.

SEMI VILLAS FOR RENT

Each consisting of four Bedrooms (two master bedrooms), Large salons, sitting room, dining room, servant's quarter, large kitchen with breakfast veranda, washing room, private office, large terrace overlooking the garden, deluxe finishing with private garage.

For more information please call Tel. 816013

CHANGE In the place of the SEMINAR of May 7th It will be held at the MARRIOTT Hotel At 8:00 P.M. instead of the FORTE GRAND Hotel

Arab Accountants Can Easily Become USA CPA's!

Deadline for Registration for the Becker CPA Review June 96 class: June 1, 1996

Information Session: May 7th at the MARRIOTT HOTEL At 8:00 P.M. All Questions will be answered

Helping Accountants become Professionals BECKER CPA SINCE 1957 REVIEW

LEBANON (Regional Office): TEL: (01) 342 577.

EGYPT (In association with the American University in Cairo): TEL: (202) 357 6735.



JORDAN (In association with the Housing Bank): THE HOUSING BANK COMPOUND, 2ND FLOOR, AMMAN. TEL: 603 757 FAX: 601 997

The Shadow

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45

*ESCAPE TO THE TOP (Arabic)

Shows: 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

* Toy Story

Shows: 12:30, 2, 3:30, 5

CONCORD "1"

* UNDER SIEGE "2"

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

* Ace Ventura "2"

Shows: 2, 5:15

CONCORD "2"

HEATE

Shows: 3:15, 6:15, 9:15

Antonio Banderas & Salma Hayek in Desperado

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

PRESENTS THE SATIRICAL COMEDY

Arab Human Rights

Starts Monday, May 13

at 8:30 p.m.

For reservation please call 625155 - 640155

Algerian polls before mid-97

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Algeria's president announced Sunday that legislative elections would be held next year, but it appeared that the country's key opposition would remain banned.

President Liamine Zeroual, elected in November to a five-year term, said the elections would be held sometime in the first half of 1997.

Mr. Zeroual did not say whether the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), banned since January 1992 when the army cancelled legislative elections, it was poised to win, would be allowed to field candidates.

The cancellation triggered a bloody insurgency by armed extremist groups that was killed more than 40,000 people in four years of strife. There was no immediate reaction to Mr. Zeroual's announcement.

Mr. Zeroual said the balloting would be followed by local community elections and preceded by a national referendum on Algeria's constitution, last revised in 1989.

Legislative elections were a key campaign promise of Mr. Zeroual, a retired army general appointed in 1994 to lead the country in a transition to democracy.

Bomb kills two
Algerian newspapers said on Sunday a bomb exploded at a bus stop near an elementary school in north-east Algeria, killing two people and wounding 14.

The home-made bomb went off in Tizi-Ouzou town, 90 kilometres east of Algiers, on Saturday afternoon at the same time when three gunmen shot dead former Interior Minister Mohammed Hardi at a park near in Algiers.

The report did not specify if the dead and wounded in the bomb blast were students from the nearby school.

No group claimed responsibility for the blast. Three armed men mowed down Hardi in a marauding

factory car park at Oued Smar district of Algiers on Saturday at 3.30 p.m. (1430 GMT), according to a security forces statement.

The statement called the 53-year-old Hardi slaying a "criminal attack," the official term used to describe guerrilla attacks.

No group claimed responsibility for his assassination. Hardi, a former journalist, spearheaded as interior minister the government struggle against the rebels from July 1992 until September 1993.

"The martyr Mohammed Hardi, who served his homeland with dedication and loyalty, was the victim of brutal terrorism which attacks the entire Algerian nation indiscriminately," Prime Minister Ahmad Ouyahia said in a message read out in the Algerian radio and television.

"On behalf of the government and in his own name, the prime minister strongly condemned this unforgivable dastardly attack, saying that its perpetrators would most certainly be punished," the message added.

Mr. Zeroual, in his first news conference on Sunday since he being elected in 1995, also mentioned plans to change the political parties law and poll legislation before the elections.

"All these elements will be the object of a memorandum sent to the participants in this dialogue to get their opinions before starting a second stage of dialogue," Mr. Zeroual said.

Mr. Zeroual insisted he wanted to include the country's full "political community" in an effort to end civil strife.

"It is necessary to find a final solution through the consultation of all of the political community in order to pull the country out of its crisis," he said.

"We can get out of the crisis for one year or more but we will fail again if we will not attack the roots of the crisis," Mr. Zeroual added.

Predictions of tight Peres-Netanyahu race alarm Labour

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Officials in Israel's Labour Party are alarmed over private opinion polls showing opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu pulling close to Prime Minister Shimon Peres ahead of May 29 elections, press reports said Sunday.

The tabloid daily Yediot Aharonot said that while the main surveys published in recent weeks show Mr. Peres holding a steady five-to-six point lead over Mr. Netanyahu in the race for prime minister, a series of private polls put the contest much closer.

The Labour poll, however, did not include Arab Israeli voters, recent immigrants from the former Soviet Union or ultra-orthodox Jews. The daily said Labour Party officials were "alarmed" by the polls, which highlighted the key role that will be played by Israel's Arab minority, who make up 13 per cent of the electorate and traditionally support the Labour Party.

One poll published a week ago by the Yediot Aharonot showed that 47 per cent of Arab Israelis favour Mr. Peres for prime minister, while only 2.8 per cent back Mr. Netanyahu.

But more than 15 per cent of Arab voters said they planned to boycott the election for prime minister — who will be directly chosen by voters for the first time this year — while 33 per cent remain undecided.

Several Arab politicians have called for a boycott of the elections in protest at Israel's offensive last month against Hizbollah guerrillas in Lebanon.

The Yediot Aharonot quoted Labour officials as expressing concern that polls showing Jewish voters evenly

split between Mr. Peres and Mr. Netanyahu will lead to complacency and a low turnout among Arabs.

"If there is really parity between Bibi (Netanyahu) and Peres among the Jews, the Arabs will not vote and that is not good," the newspaper quoted Tourism Minister Uzi Baram as saying. Mr. Baram heads the Labour Party's campaign among Arab voters.

Israel denies report

Israel denied a newspaper report Sunday that it was hunting five Palestinian men who slipped into the country to carry out suicide bombings and other attacks.

The daily newspaper Maariv published pictures of five men, four from the Gaza Strip and one from the West Bank city of Nablus, it said had been distributed to police stations in the Tel Aviv region.

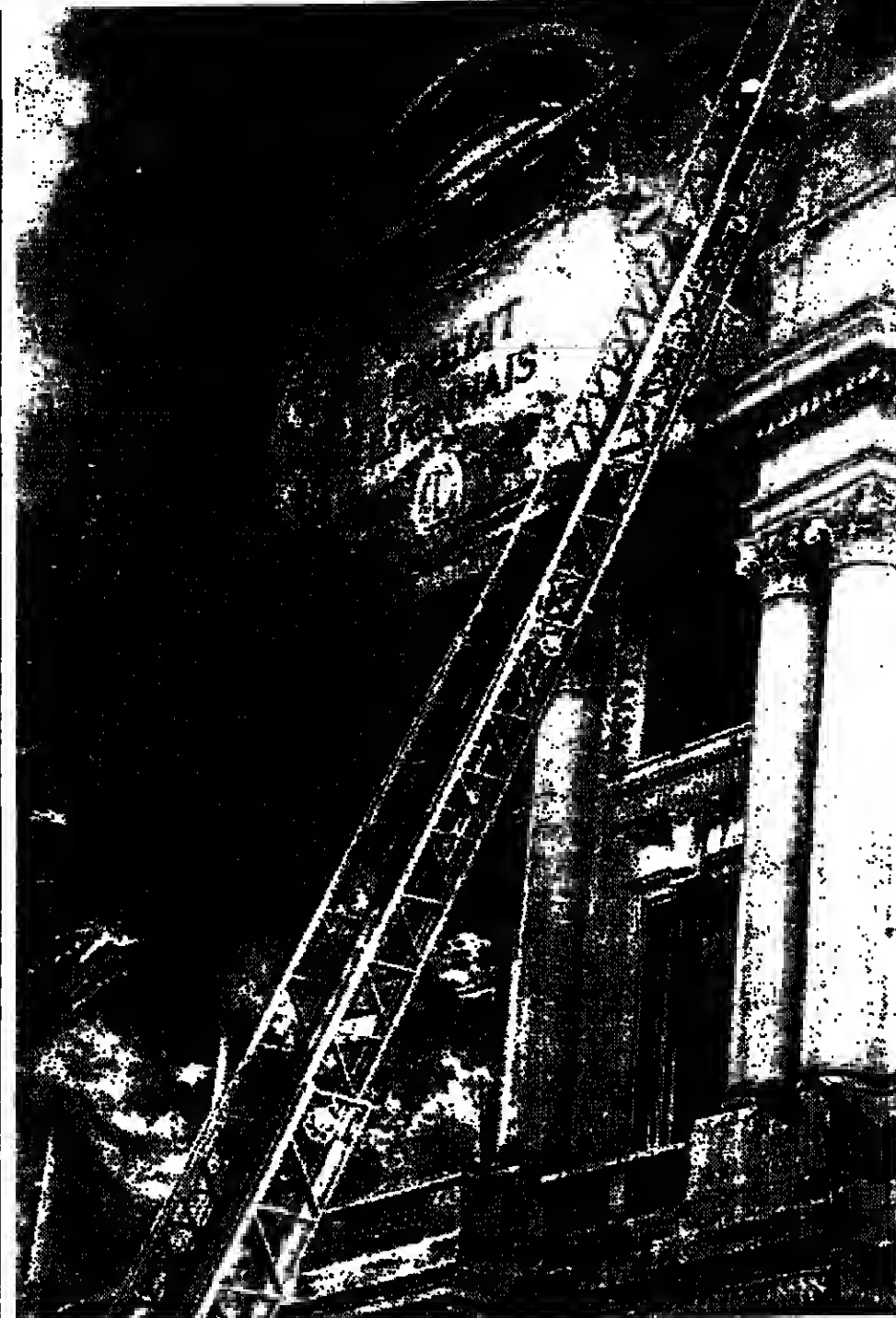
The Shin Bet internal security agency and police believe the five are waiting for an opportune moment to carry out attacks in the centre of the country, notably in the Mediterranean resort of Netanya, the newspaper said.

However, an army spokesman said the report was "baseless."

The five Palestinians named are all in the Gaza Strip and some in prison, he said. Police Minister Moshe Shahal told a press conference the report was "inaccurate," but warned of planned attacks by the Palestinian radical groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad in the run-up to the general election.

Maariv identified the five as Ahmad Fuad, 22, from Rafah in the Gaza Strip, Fayez Daroushe from Awarta village near Nablus, Hassan Mustapha Shahwad, 19, from Khan Yunes in Gaza, Iyad Ibrahim Talaa, 24, from Rafah and Samir Nababin, 36, also from Gaza.

It quoted police as saying the five were planning anti-Israeli attacks, including possible suicide bombings.



A Paris firefighter battles a huge blaze at the historic headquarters of the state-owned Credit Lyonnais on Sunday (Reuters photo)

Fire ravages major Paris bank

PARIS (AFP) — Some 250 firefighters on Sunday battled to control a spectacular blaze that ravaged the headquarters of the French bank Credit Lyonnais in central Paris. Twenty-three people were suffering from burns or smoke inhalation, including 19 firemen and four Credit Lyonnais security guards, rescuers said.

A bank spokesman told reporters, however, that none of the bank's operations, including interventions on financial markets, would be affected because no information had been lost.

Credit Lyonnais is a government-owned bank which in recent years experienced huge losses that required a state bailout plan. Paris police chief Philippe Masson said that the fire, which broke out at about 8.30 a.m. (0630 GMT) in the com-

puterised trading room, "the nerve centre" of the bank's financial operations, was "contained but not under control" some seven hours after it started. He added that a short-circuit may have caused the fire.

Mr. Masson said the historic 19th-century building located in central Paris, near the Opera Garnier, has fake ceilings which burn easily and encourage flames to shoot upwards thus hampering the rescue operations.

Jean-Luc Chivaut, a spokesman for the firefighters, said Paris's 30 fire stations had been mobilised to fight the fire, and firefighters inside the building were being relayed every three hours.

The fire by mid-day had engulfed 6,000 of the 9,000 square metres of the first floor of the building, and was billowing huge clouds of

smoke that could be seen miles away.

The Credit Lyonnais spokesman said the bank had foreign bureaux in New York, Tokyo and Singapore that could take over operations.

He added that officials on Sunday afternoon had started setting up a plan to accommodate the 4,000 people employed at the headquarters and assured clients that they would not be affected by the blaze.

The Credit Lyonnais headquarters is a four-storey building, with five additional storeys underground.

The fire broke out in the trading room, which is full of computers and other equipment, firemen said.

Some 250 firemen were on the scene and 24 hoses were directed at the flames, billowing huge clouds of smoke.

COLUMN

Golf round with Clinton fetches \$76,000 at auction

WASHINGTON (R) — A Washington civil servant has won the chance to play golf with President Bill Clinton by bidding \$76,000 at a private school auction. Mr. Clinton offered to play an 18-hole round of golf as his contribution to the annual fund-raiser at Sidwell Friends, the exclusive private school which his daughter Chelsea attends. Bidding quickly raced past the estimated \$6,000 to \$10,000 value of the game, and the crowd of mostly students' parents was hushed as three bidders battled into the \$70,000 range. Robert Peck, manager of computer systems for the U.S. Customs Service, can take two guests to tee off with the president.

U.K. queen to end cheap home perk for courtiers

LONDON (R) — Britain's Queen Elizabeth II is to stop providing her most senior courtiers with heavily subsidised luxury apartments in royal palaces, a Sunday newspaper reported. The decision to end the system of so-called "grace and favour" apartments will affect nearly 50 private secretaries and other top officials who run the royal household, the Sunday Times said. The report comes as the royal family is under pressure to trim its lavish lifestyle amid widespread public disaffection with the behaviour of some of its junior members. The Sunday Times said there had been intense criticism of the centuries-old privilege that provides senior royal aides with homes at vastly subsidised rates in Buckingham Palace, St. James's Palace, Windsor Castle and Hampton Court. The "perk" will be phased out as senior royal officials retire or leave their posts.

Mask of George Washington sells for \$1.1 million

NEW YORK (R) — A George Washington mask fetched \$1.1 million at auction in a \$2.6 million sale of 10 historic relics that belonged to the first U.S. president. An unidentified American private investor was the successful bidder of the mask cast by French sculptor Jean Antoine Houdon, said Charles Moore, president of the Charles G. Moore Americana Auction House. The mask, one of two in the country, is considered "one of the nearest likenesses of George Washington we have today," said Michael Toledo, an auction house consultant.

Hungary king, queen join hands after 1000 years

VESZPREM, Hungary (R) — Thousands of Hungarian Catholics squeezed into a tiny cobbled square in the west Hungarian town of Veszprem to see relics of the hands of the country's first king and his queen brought together for their 1000th wedding anniversary Saturday. In a ceremony of deep religious and national significance unthinkable before the end of communism six years ago, the preserved hand of King Istvan, who died in 1038, and an arm bone from his wife Queen Gisela were paraded outside Veszprem Basilica in elaborate glass and gold cases. The bones of Queen Gisela were brought to Hungary Friday from her tomb in Passau, in Germany, where she has been buried since her death nine centuries ago.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Aqaba Region Authority



AN INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY IN THE SOUTH COAST ZONE OF AQABA (TOURIST FAMILY CAMPING AREA WITH SUPPORTING FACILITIES)

The Aqaba Region Authority announces the above investment opportunity in the area of Ras Al-Yamaniyya on the South Coast Zone of Aqaba.

A single plot with an area of (210,000) square metres has been allocated for a tourist camping area to accommodate a minimum of (140) tents and (50) recreational vehicles with all supporting facilities such as restaurants, coffee shops, swimming pools and sports facilities. Offers for developing parts of the area of not less than (20,000) square metres may be considered, but preference will be given to developing the whole area.

Interested investors are asked to contact Aqaba Region Authority — The Investment Unit, for more detailed information and other applicable conditions during working hours not later than Saturday 25/5/1996.

Prof. Dr. Fayez Khasawneh
President
Aqaba Region Authority

Government reaffirms intention to overhaul information services

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Information Marwan Muasher said Sunday that development of the media could come only through upgrading its performance since competition is at its highest level among various nations. In a working paper he presented to the second day of a two-day seminar entitled "The Media and Information — Realities and Prospects," the minister said that the media has an important role to play in various sectors and it is expected to highlight the nation's various achievements.

For this reason, he said, Jordan faces the challenge of laying the ground for a modern and competitive and effective information service to deal with the rapid developments in the region and the world at large.

Dr. Muasher said that the government was determined to raise the standard of the official information services and boost the media sector through restructuring the official information services, and giving them a more effective

and meaningful role and flexibility. The government will amend the laws governing the work of radio and television and the official news agency to enable these services to operate with financial and administrative independence from the government and managed by a board of experts.

These changes aim at enabling these information agencies to become national institutions with their boards, which represent various sectors of the public, managing and directing their programmes and general policies, said Dr. Muasher.

Under the present system, the radio and television corporation has proved impotent in the face of competition from the countries and vis-a-vis the developments in the local, regional and international fields and it is unreasonable to keep these services under the direct management of the government reflecting only the government's views, the minister said.

Under democracy, he

added, dialogue and free expression are required and this can be achieved through radio and television among other tools of the media because people would only accept concepts and ideas that are convincing to them and serving their own interests and not ideas that are obsolete and relate to the past ages in a modern age.

Since 1989 Jordan achieved major accomplishments pertaining to political pluralism, democracy and laws that enhance respect of human rights and therefore the country is in need of responsible and dynamic media to go hand in hand with these achievements, he added.

The minister expressed the view that the official and private media have both proved unable to present a qualitative improvement and were unable to relay Jordan's cultural message to Jordanian citizens and the world at large. Radio and television in particular failed for example to compete with the Arab

(Continued on page 7)

European Supplement

May 9, 1996
In English
in both

Al Ra'i & the Jordan Times

To advertise please call 667171 Ext. 223